Isabella Lawrence

LETTERS

WRITTEN

BETWEEN

YORICK AND ELIZA

WITH

STERNE'S LETTERS

TO HIS

FRIENDS.

LONDON,
Printed for A. T. TAYLOR
1788.

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I.

PREFACE OF THE EDITOR OF YORICK'S LETTERS.

THE foul and infamous traffic, between diſhoneſt bookſellers, and profligate ſcribblers, which has ſubſiſted for more than a century, has juſtly brought poſthumous publications under ſuſpicion, in England, France, and more eſpecially in Holland: miniſters of ſtate in every European court, great generals, royal miſtreſſes, authors of eſtabliſhed reputation, in a word, all ſuch as have had the misfortune to advance themſelves to eminence, have been obliged to leave behind them parcels of letters, and other memoirs, of the moſt ſecret and important tranſactions of their times, in which, every fact beyond the information of a news-paper, or coffeehouſe-chat, is ſo faithfully miſrepreſented, every character delineated with ſuch punctual deviation from the truth, and cauſes and effects which have no poſſible relation, are with ſuch amazing effrontery obtruded upon the public, that it is no wonder if men of ſenſe, who read for inſtruction as well as entertainment, generally condemn them in the lump, never, or very rarely, affording them

the honour of a perusal. — The publisher of these letters, however, has not the smallest apprehension that any part of this well grounded censure can fall to his share; he deals not in surprising events to astonish the reader, nor in characters, one excepted, which have figured on the great theatre of the world; he purposely waves all proofs which might be drawn concerning their authenticity, from the character of the gentleman who had the perusal of the originals, and, with Eliza's permission, faithfully copied them at Bombay in the East Indies; from, the testimony of many reputable families in this city, who knew and loved Eliza, caressed and admired Mr. Sterne, and were well acquainted with the tender friendship between them; from many curious anecdotes in the letters themselves, any one of which were fully sufficient to authenticate them, and submits his reputation to the taste and discernment of the commonest reader, who must, in one view, perceive that these letters are genuine, beyond any possibility of doubt. — As the public is unquestionably entitled to every kind of information concerning the characters contained in these letters, which consists with the duties of humanity and a good citizen, that is, a minute acquaintance with those of whom honourable mention is made, or the publisher is furnished with authorities to vindicate from Mr. Sterne's censures, which as a man of warm temper and lively imagination, he was perhaps sometimes hurried into without due reflection, he persua-

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des himſelf that no party concerned, will or can be offended with this publication, eſpecially if it is conſidered that without ſuch information it would be cold and unentertaining; that by publiſhing their merits he cannot be underſtood to intend them any injury, and without it, it would in himſelf fail in his duty to the public. — Eliza, the lady to whom theſe letters are addreſſed, is Mrs. Elizabeth Draper, wife of Daniel Draper, Eſq. Counſellor at Bombay, and at preſent chief of the Engliſh factory at Surat, — a gentleman very much reſpected in that quarter of the globe,—ſhe is by birth an Eaſt-Indian; but the circumſtance of being born in the country not proving ſufficient to defend her delicate frame againſt the heats of that burning climate, ſhe came to England for the recovery of her health, when by accident ſhe became acquainted with Mr. Sterne. He immediately diſcovered in her a mind ſo congenial with his own, ſo enlightened, ſo refined, and ſo tender, that their mutual attraction preſently joined them in the cloſeſt union that purity could poſſibly admit of; he loved her as his friend, and prided in her as his pupil; all her concerns became preſently his; her health, her circumſtances, her reputation, her children, were his; his fortune, his time, his country, were at her diſpoſal, ſo far as the ſacrifice of all or any of theſe might, in his opinion, contribute to her real happineſs. If it is aſked whether the glowing heat of Mr. Sterne's affection never tranſported him to a flight beyond

the limits of pure Platoniſm, the publiſher will not take upon him abſolutely to deny it; but this he thinks, ſo far from leaving any ſtain upon that gentleman's memory, that it perhaps includes his faireſt encomium; ſince to cheriſh the ſeeds of piety and chaſtity in a heart which the paſſions are intereſted to corrupt, muſt be allowed to be the nobleſt effort of a ſoul fraught and fortified with the juſteſt ſentiments of religion and virtue. — Mr. and Mrs. James, ſo frequently and honourably mentioned in theſe letters, are the worthy heads of an opulent family in this city: their character is too well eſtabliſhed to need the aid of the publiſher in ſecuring the eſtimation they ſo well deſerve, and univerſally poſſeſs, yet he cannot reſtrain one obſervation; that to have been reſpected and beloved by Mr. Sterne and Mrs. Draper, is no inconſiderable teſtimony of their merit, and ſuch as it cannot be diſpleaſing to them to ſee publiſhed to the world. — Miſs Light, now Mrs. Stratton, is on all accounts a very amiable young lady, — ſhe was accidentally a paſſenger in the ſame ſhip with Eliza, and inſtantly engaged her friendſhip and eſteem; but being mentioned in one of Mrs. Draper's letters to Mr. Sterne, in ſomewhat of a comparative manner with herſelf, his partiality for her, as ſhe modeſtly expreſſed it, took the alarm, and betrayed him into ſome expreſſions, the coarſeneſs of which cannot be excuſed. Mrs. Draper declares that this lady was entirely unknown to him, and infinitely ſuperior to his

his idea of her: ſhe has been lately married to George Stratton, Eſq. Counſellor at Madraſs. — The manner in which Mr. Sterne's acquaintance with the celebrated Lord Bathurſt, the friend and companion of Addiſon, Swift, Pope, Steele, and all the fineſt wits of the laſt age, commenced, cannot fail to attract the attention of the curious reader: here, that great man is ſocial and unreſerved, unſhackled with that ſedulity in ſupporting a feigned character, which expoſes moſt of his rank to the contempt of wiſe men, and the ridicule of their valets de chambre; here he appears the ſame as in his hours of feſtivity and happineſs with Swift and Addiſon, ſuperior to forms and ceremonies, and, in his eighty-fifth year, abounding in wit, vivacity, and humanity: methinks, the pleaſure of ſuch a gentleman's acquaintance reſembles that of converſing with ſuperior beings; but it is not fit to dwell longer on this pleaſing topic, leſt it ſhould anticipate the reader's pleaſure in peruſing the letter itſelf. One remark however it ſuggeſts, which may be uſeful to old men in general, namely, that it appears by his Lordſhip's example, the ſour contracted ſpirit obſervable in old age, is not ſpecifically an effect of years, altho' they are commonly pleaded in its excuſe. Old men would therefore do well to correct this odious quality in themſelves; or, if that muſt not be, to invent a better apology for it. It is very much to be lamented, that Eliza's modeſty was invincible to all the publiſher's endeavours to

obtain her anſwers to theſe letters: her wit, penetration, and judgment, her happineſs in the epiſtolary ſtyle, ſo rapturouſly recommended by Mr. Sterne, could not fail to furniſh a rich entertainment for the public. The publiſher could not help telling her, that he wiſhed to God ſhe was really poſſeſſed of that vanity with which ſhe was charged; to which ſhe replied, that ſhe was ſo far from acquitting herſelf of vanity, that ſhe ſuſpected that to be the cauſe why ſhe could not prevail on herſelf to ſubmit her letters to the public eye! for altho' Mr. Sterne was partial to every thing of her's, ſhe could not hope that the world would be ſo too. With this anſwer he was obliged to be contented; yet cannot reflect without deep concern, that this elegant accompliſhment, ſo peculiarly adapted to the refined and delicate underſtandings of ladies ſhould be yet ſo rare, that we can boaſt of only one Lady Wortley Montague among us; and that Eliza, in particular, could not be prevailed on to follow the example of that admired lady. — The reader will remark that theſe letters have various ſignatures; ſometimes he ſigns Sterne, ſometimes Yorick, and to one or two he ſigns Her Bramin. Altho' it is pretty generally known who the Bramins are, yet leſt any body ſhould be at a loſs, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that the principal caſt or tribe among the idolatrous Indians are the Bramins, and out of the chief claſs of this caſt comes the prieſts ſo famous for their auſterities, and the ſhocking

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ing torments, and frequently death, they voluntarily expoſe themſelves to, on a religious account. Now, as Mr. Sterne was a clergyman, and Eliza an Indian by birth, it was cuſtomary with her to call him her Bramin, which he accordingly, in his pleaſant moods, uſes as a ſignature. —

It remains only to take ſome notice of the family, marked with aſteriſks, on whom Mr. Sterne has thought proper to ſhed the bittereſt gall of his pen. It is however evident, even from ſome paſſages in the letters themſelves, that Mrs. Draper could not be eaſily prevailed on to ſee this family in the ſame odious light in which they appeared to her perhaps overzealous friend. He, in the heat, or I may ſay, hurry of his affection, might have accepted ſuſpicious circumſtances as real evidences of guilt, or liſtened too unguardedly to the inſinuations of their enemies.

Be that as it may, as the publiſher is not furniſhed with ſufficient authorities to exculpate them, he chuſes to drop the ungrateful ſubject, heartily wiſhing, that this family may not only be innocent of the ſhocking treachery with which they are charged, but may be able to make their innocence appear clearly to the world; otherwiſe, that no perſon may be induſtrious enough to make known their name.

II.

PREFACE OF THE EDITOR OF ELIZA'S LETTERS.

THE editor of the elegant and pathetic letters, from YORICK to ELIZA, which have lately made their appearance in the world, ſays, "It is very much to be lamented, that Eliza's mo-"deſty was invincible to all the publiſher's endea-"vours to obtain her anſwers to theſe letters.

"Her wit, penetration, and judgment; her hap-"pineſs in the epiſtolary ſtyle, ſo rapturouſly com-"mended by Mr. Sterne, could not fail to furniſh "a rich entertainment for the public — the publiſher "could not help telling her, that he wiſhed to God, "ſhe really was poſſeſſed of that vanity with which "ſhe was charged."

We ſhould as ſincerely lament Eliza's invincible modeſty, as the editor of thoſe letters, if we thought her ſenſibility, in that reſpect, would preclude the publication of ſuch valuable compoſitions; or if we imagined that her too ſcrupulous partiality for her particular friends, or in the moſt enlarged idea, the circle of her acquaintance, ought in juſtice to impede the

the more general gratification of that PUBLIC, who by means of YORICK's letters, addreſſed to her, muſt of courſe become her admirers.

Nor ought Eliza to blame us — the delicate mind is frequently too ſevere to itſelf, and abridges its own merit of that fame, which is juſtly its due.

It is therefore incumbent on the friends of ſuch a being, to break through ſuch partial reſtrictions, and diſobey thoſe orders, which are only the effects of a too timerous ſenſibility.

To diſobey the ſelf-denying rigor of ſuch commands, to put a negative on ſuch bashful delicacy, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, is not only friendly, but even meritorious.

Real merit is always modeſt, it ſeeks ſolitude, would pine in ſecret, and ſink unnoticed into oblivion.

Then ſurely that perſon is deſerving of applauſe, or at leaſt the thanks of the public, who draws it from its retirement, brings it to the light for public benefit, and places it in that point of view in which it ought to be conſpicuouſly ſeen, and to ſhine for general imitation, and improvement.

Eliza's only objection to the publication of her letters, was; That ſhe thought, "Although Mr.

"Sterne

"Sterne was partial to every thing of her's, ſhe could "not hope that the world would be ſo too."

But we will venture to affirm, that the world will not think this argument ought to be deemed ſufficiently ſtrong, to deprive them of ſuch a valuable entertainment:

For the excellency of the epiſtles themſelves, and the great deference which ſhould be paid to the judgment of Mr. Sterne, are reaſons more than ſufficient to overturn the objection. —— And that once fallen, not a ſyllable can be juſtly advanced againſt this publication.

For a character of Eliza's letters, take Mr. Sterne's own words:

"Who taught you the art of writing ſo ſweetly, "Eliza? — You abſolutely have exalted it to a ſcience.

"When I am in want of ready caſh, and ill health "will permit my genius to exert itſelf, I ſhall print "your letters as finiſhed Eſſays, by an un-"fortunate Indian Lady".

"The ſtyle is new, and would almoſt be a ſuffi-"cient recommendation, for their ſelling well, wi-"thout merit:

"But their ſenſe, natural eaſe, and ſpirit, are not "to be equalled, I believe, in this ſection of the "globe

"globe — nor, I will anſwer for it, by any of your "countrywomen in your's."

Then what a crime would the poſſeſſor of ſuch literary jewels, ſuch a mental treaſure, have been guilty of, in ſecluding it from the public, and, like the miſer, locking that from the light, which generouſly diffuſed, muſt be pleaſing and uſeful to all.

Nothing but her native diffidence could have induced Eliza to have entertained the leaſt idea of being ſo unkind, or of wiſhing her friends to be ſo ſelfiſh.

The curioſity of the public is raiſed by the publication of Yorick's letters — it ought to be gratified with the counterpart.

Nay, the lady's fame is concerned — it is neceſſary that her anſwers ſhould be publiſhed — it is neceſſary to ſecure her reputation from the ſmalleſt ſhadow of cenſure, to evince before the face of the world, that her ideas were not leſs pure than her Bramin's.

The publication of the following letters will prove, that her expreſſions, tho' as animated, were no leſs ſcrupulouſly delicate than her Yoricks:

And likewiſe, that Platoniſm, ſo much ridiculed, ſo long thought a chimera, may exiſt, and even with the ſtrongeſt ſenſibility, and warmeſt imagination.

Though Eliza was too diffident of her abilities, or nice in her ideas, to oblige the public with her letters

letters to Yorick, yet ſhe indulged many of her friends with copies of them; — theſe again gratified many within the circle of their acquaintance with the ſame favor.

And thus they, in fact, became publiſhed; unleſs the word ſignifies nothing, without being applied to what iſſues from the preſs only.

Thus we can only claim the merit of giving a more fair, convenient, and general edition of theſe elegant epiſtles, of which we received correct copies from a lady, not more dignified by her rank in life, than elevated by her underſtanding.

She gave us leave, if we thought proper, to uſe her name; — but we declined it, thinking the letters ſufficient to recommend themſelves, and the beſt teſtimonies in their own favor:

Agreeable to Mr. Sterne's opinion, concerning Eliza's picture,

"I requeſted, ſays he, that you would come "ſimple and unadorned, when you ſat for me, kno- "wing, as I ſee with unprejudiced eyes, that you "could receive no addition from the ſilk-worm's aid, "or jeweller's poliſh."

Thus we ſend Eliza's anſwers to Yorick's epiſtles into the world, without any recommendation, except their own intrinſic merit.

LETTER I.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

ELIZA will receive my books with this. The ſermons came all hot from the heart: I wiſh that I could give them any title to be offered to yours.—The others came from the head — I am more indifferent about their reception.

I know not how it comes about, but I am half in love with you — I ought to be wholly ſo; for I never valued, or ſaw more good qualities to value, or thought more of one of your ſex than of you; ſo adieu,

Yours,

faithfully, if not affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER II.

ELIZA TO YORICK.

MY BRAMIN,

I RECEIVED your Sentimental Journey. — Your imagination has ſtrange powers — it has awakened feelings in my heart, which I never knew I poſſeſſed — You make me vain — you make me in love with my own ſenſibility. —

I bedewed your pathetic pages with tears — but they were tears of pleaſure — my heart flowed through my eyes — every particle of tenderneſs in my whole frame was awakened. —

You take the ſureſt method to improve the underſtanding — you convince the reaſon, by touching the ſoul. —

Sure the greateſt compliments an author can receive, are the ſighs and tears of his readers — ſuch ſincere applauſe I amply gave you.

I beg, if you value me, that you will not flatter me — I am already too vain — and praiſe from a man of ſenſe is dangerous.

I am in the utmoſt extent of the word, your

Cordial friend,

ELIZA.

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LETTER III.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

I cannot reſt, Eliza, though I ſhall call on you at half paſt twelve, till I know how you do.—May thy dear face ſmile, as thon riſeſt, like the ſun of this morning. I was much grieved to hear of your alarming indiſpoſition yeſterday; and diſappointed too, at not being let in. – Remember, my dear, that a friend has the ſame right as a phyſician. The etiquettes of this town, you'll ſay, ſay otherwiſe.—No matter! Delicacy and propriety do nôt always conſiſt in obſerving their frigid doctrines.

I am going out to breakfaſt, but ſhall be at my lodgings by eleven; when I hope to read a ſingle line under thy own hand, that thou art better, and wilt be glad to ſee thy

BRAMIN.

9 o'clock.

LETTER IV.

ELIZA to YORICK.

My Bramin.

IT is with pleaſure I inform you, that I am better—becauſe I believe it will give you pleaſure.

You tell me, "A friend has the ſame right as a phyſician."

Then you may claim a double right — you are my friend, and phyſician, the moſt valuable of phyſicians, the phyſician of my mind—come then, and bring the beſt of cordials—the cordial of ſentiment — if thy converſation does not eradicate my diſorder entirely—it will make me forget that I am ill — I ſhall feel no pain while you are preſent.

To wiſh to ſee you—you find is the intereſt, as well as deſire of,

Ten o'clock.

ELIZA.

LETTER V.

YORICK to ELIZA.

I got thy letter laſt night, Eliza, on my return from Lord Bathurſt's, where I dined, and where I was heard, as I talked of thee, an hour, without intermiſſion, with ſo much pleaſure and attention, that the good old Lord toaſted your health three different times; and now he is in his eighty-fifth year, ſays he hopes to live long enough to be introduced as a friend to my fair Indian diſciple, and to ſee her eclipſe all other nabobeſſes as much in wealth, as ſhe does already in exterior and, what is far better, in interior merit. I hope ſo too. This nobleman is an old friend of mine. — You know he was always the protector of men of wit and genius; and has had thoſe of the laſt century, Addiſon, Steele, Pope, Swift, Prior, &c. &c. always at his table.—The manner in which his notice began of me, was as ſingular as it was polite. — He came up to me, one day, as I was at the princeſs of Wales's court. "I want to know you, Mr. Sterne; but it is fit you ſhould know, alſo, who it is that wiſhes this pleaſure. You have heard, continued he, of an old Lord Bathurſt, of whom your Popes and Swifts, have ſung and ſpoken ſo much: I have lived my life with geniuſes of that caſt; but have ſurvived them; and, deſpairing ever to find their equals, it is ſome years ſince I have cloſed my accounts,

and ſhut up my books, with thoughts of never opening them again: but you have kindled a deſire in me of opening them once more before I die; which I now do; ſo go home and dine with me." — This nobleman, I ſay, is a prodigy; for at eighty-five he has all the wit and promptneſs of a man of thirty. A diſpoſition to be pleaſed, and a power to pleaſe others beyond whatever I knew: added to which, a man of learning, courteſy, and feeling.

He heard me talk of thee, Eliza, with uncommon ſatisfaction; for there was only a third perſon, and of ſenſibility, with us. — And a moſt ſentimental afternoon, 'till nine o'clock, have we paſſed! But thou, Eliza, wert the ſtar that conducted and enliven'd the diſcourſe. — And when I talked not of thee, ſtill didſt thou fill my mind, and warmedſt every thought I uttered; for I am not aſhamed to acknowledge I greatly miſs thee. — Beſt of all good girls! the ſufferings I have ſuſtained the whole night on account of thine, Eliza, are beyond my power of words. — Aſſuredly does Heaven give ſtrength proportioned to the weight he lays upon us! Thou haſt been bowed down, my child, with every burden that ſorrow of heart, and pain of body, could inflict upon a poor being; and ſtill thou telleſt me, thou art beginning to get eaſe; — thy fever gone, thy ſickneſs, the pain in thy ſide vaniſhing alſo. — May every evil ſo vaniſh that thwarts Eliza's happineſs, or but awakens thy fears for a moment! —

Fear

Fear nothing, my dear! — Hope every thing; and the balm of this paſſion will ſhed its influence on thy health, and make thee enjoy a ſpring of youth and chearfulneſs, more than thou haſt hardly yet taſted.

And ſo thou haſt fixed thy Bramin's portrait over thy writing deſk; and will conſult it in all doubts and difficulties. —— Grateful and good girl! Yorick ſmiles contentedly over all thou doſt; his picture does not do juſtice to his own complacency!

Thy ſweet little plan and diſtribution of thy time — how worthy of thee! Indeed, Eliza, thou leaveſt me nothing to direct thee in; thou leaveſt me nothing to require, nothing to aſk — but a continuation of that conduct which won my eſteem, and has made me thy friend for ever.

May the roſes come quick back to thy cheeks, and the rubies to thy lips! But truſt my declaration, Eliza, that thy huſband, if he is the good, feeling man I wiſh him, will preſs thee to him with more honeſt warmth and affection, and kiſs thy pale, poor, dejected face, with more tranſport, than he would be able to do, in the beſt bloom of all thy beauty; — and ſo he ought, or I pity him. He muſt have ſtrange feelings, if he knows not the value of ſuch a creature as thou art!

I am glad Miſs Light goes with you. She may relieve you from many anxious moments. — I am glad your ſhip-mates are friendly beings. You could leaſt diſpenſe with what is contrary to your own nature, which is ſoft and gentle, Eliza. — It would civilize ſavages.—Though pity were it thou ſhould'ſt be tainted with the office! How canſt thou make apologies for thy laſt letter? 'tis moſt delicious to me, for the very reaſon you excuſe it. Write to me, my child, only ſuch. Let them ſpeak the eaſy careleſſneſs of a heart that opens itſelf, any how, and every how, to a man you ought to eſteem and truſt. Such, Eliza, I write to thee,—and ſo I ſhould ever live with thee, moſt artleſsly, moſt affectionately, if providence permitted thy reſidence in the ſame ſection of the globe; for I am, all that honour and affection can make me,

Thy

BRAMIN.

LETTER VI.

ELIZA to YORICK.

KIND YORICK,

I peruſed your epiſtle, as I always do, with infinite pleaſure — I am charmed with your account of that worthy nobleman, Lord Bathurſt; — half a ſcore of ſuch as him would make old age amiable, redeem it from the character of moroſſneſs, and render it the moſt deſirable period of life.

The company his lordſhip has kept, and the friendſhips he has courted, ſufficiently evidence his underſtanding — the manner of his introducing himſelf to you, at the Princeſs of Wales's Court, is enough to render his name reſpectable. —

I am obliged to his lordſhip for his good opinion of me, though I only ſhone like the moon with borrowed light — I cannot merit his encomiums — they are not due to myſelf; but to my picture, as drawn by your brilliant imagination — your kind fancy was the ſun, that gave me the light, which his lordſhip admired. ——

You ſpeak with ſeraphic truth, when you ſay, heaven gives us ſtrength, proportioned to the weight it lays upon us — I have experienced it—for I found fortitude encreaſe with my illneſs—and as my health

decayed, my dependance upon providence grew ſtronger. ——

But I am better — thank heaven — you bid me hope every thing — I do! — Hope is the balm of my ſoul, the kind ſoother of my anguiſh upon all occaſions. ——

The time approaches for my departure from England — I could wiſh you to be of the voyage — your converſation would ſhorten the tedious hours, and ſmooth the rugged boſom of the deep. I ſhould find no terrors from the wavering elements, nor dread the dangers that ſurrounded my floating priſon. ——

Yet why ſhould I wiſh to call you from your peaceful retirement, and domeſtic happineſs — to truſt the precarious elements, and ſeek an inclement ſky? — Cruel thought Eliza! be content to bear thy Yorick's image in thy mind — and to treaſure his inſtructions in thy heart — then thou wilt be properly ſuſtained againſt the changes of torture, and dangers of the deep — then thou wilt be in the true ſenſe of the expreſſion,

YORICK'S ELIZA. ——

LETTER VII.

ELIZA TO YORICK.

KIND YORICK,

MY nerves are ſo weak, and my hand trembles ſo much, that I am afraid this ſcrawl will hardly be intelligible — I am extremely ill, — indeed I am. —

I am obliged to exert myſelf to write this. — Preſent my kind reſpects to Mr. and Mrs. James — they are in my heart — they occupy a ſhare of my cordial friendſhip, with my Bramin — may heaven preſerve you all from experiencing the anguiſh my poor weak being is oppreſſed with. —

But think not Yorick that I complain — no! —

Bountiful heaven, I thank thee for my afflictions — thou chaſtiſeſt me for my good. — my poor vain heart had wandered from the thoughts of futurity, — thou haſt brought it back, and fixed its attention to the point where it ought to dwell. — O keep me from the ſin of repining, and give me ſtrength to bear my afflictions with patience.

The family of the ***s have been with me — they are truly amiable beings — I admire them greatly — they were extremely afflicted at my ſituation — I believe they felt for me — I am ſure they regard me.

I am taken with a ſtrange dizzineſs — I can ſay no more, adieu.

ELIZA.

LETTER VIII.

YORICK to ELIZA.

I write this, Eliza, at Mr. James's, whilſt he is dreſſing and the dear girl, his wife, is writing, beſide me, to thee.—I got your melancholy billet before we ſat down to dinner. 'Tis melancholy indeed, my dear, to hear ſo piteous an account of thy ſickneſs! Thou art encountered with evils enough, without that additional weight! I fear it will ſink thy poor ſoul, and body with it, paſt recovery.—Heaven ſupply thee with fortitude! We have talked of nothing but thee, Eliza, and of thy ſweet virtues, and endearing conduct, all the afternoon. Mrs. James, and thy Bramin, have mixt their tears a hundred times, in ſpeaking of thy hardſhips, thy goodneſs, thy graces. — The ****s, by heavens, are worthleſs! I have heard enough to tremble at the articulation of the name. — How could you, Eliza, leave them, or ſuffer them to leave you rather, with impreſſions the leaſt favourable? I have told thee enough to plant diſguſt againſt their treachery to thee, to the laſt hour of thy life! Yet ſtill, thou toldeſt Mrs. James at laſt, that thou believeſt they affectionately love thee. — Her delicacy to my Eliza, and true regard to her eaſe of mind, have ſaved thee from hearing more glaring proofs of their baſeneſs. — For God's ſake write not to them; nor foul thy fair character with ſuch polluted hearts—

They

They love thee! What proof? Is it their actions that ſay ſo? or their zeal for thoſe attachments, which do thee honour, and make thee happy? or their tenderneſs for thy fame? No!—But they weep, and ſay tender things. — Adieu to all ſuch for ever, Mrs. James's honeſt heart revolts againſt the idea of ever returning them one viſit. — I honour her, and I honour thee, for almoſt every act of thy life, but this blind partiality for an unworthy being.

Forgive my zeal, dear girl, and allow me a right which ariſes only out of that fund of affection I have, and ſhall preſerve for thee to the hour of my death! Reflect, Eliza, what are my motives for perpetually adviſing thee? think whether I can have any, but what proceed from the cauſe I have mentioned! I think you are a very deſerving woman; and that you want nothing but firmneſs, and a better opinion of yourſelf, to be the beſt female character I know. I wiſh I could inſpire you with a ſhare of that vanity your enemies lay to your charge; though to me it has never been viſible, becauſe I think in a well turned mind, it will produce good effects.

I probably ſhall never ſee you more; yet I flatter myſelf you'll ſometimes think of me with pleaſure; becauſe you muſt be convinced I love you, and ſo intereſt myſelf in your rectitude, that I had rather hear

of

of any evil befalling you, than your want of reverence for yourſelf. I had not power to keep this remonſtrance in my breaſt.—It's now out; ſo adieu. Heaven watch over my Eliza.

Thine,

YORICK.

LETTER IX.

ELIZA to YORICK.

MY BRAMIN,

I find myſelf rather better to-day, my head is eaſier.

Accept my grateful thanks—make them acceptable to Mr. and Mrs. James—for the concern you have all had upon my account—my overflowing heart thanks ye—though my expreſſions are too weak to deſcribe its feelings.

You have certainly been miſinformed! I cannot think the *** family really merit the aſperity with which you mention it—I cannot think ill of any being, without having had ſome occaſion.—I would not wiſh to live a ſlave to ſuſpicion—that were to be

be miſerable indeed — I am ſenſible, my Bramin would not conceive a hard opinion of any one, without ſome grounds — but he may have been deceived—his good heart may have been too open to the deſigning—and the ***s miſrepreſented.

I muſt be exceedingly troubleſome to you—I want your aſſiſtance to execute a few commiſſions — excuſe your Eliza—ſhe cannot take that freedom—ſhe cannot truſt any perſon elſe.

I muſt intreat, that you would procure directions from Mr. Zumpe, in what manner I am to tune my piano-forte—as I deſign it to be my harmonious companion, during the voyage.

I ſhould be glad of about a dozen braſs ſcrews, to put up in my cabin, as conveniences to hang any thing upon.

I muſt have a proper journal book, to amuſe myſelf, in minuting the particulars of my voyage.

An arm chair will likewiſe be uſeful to me.

Be kind enough to ſend any parcel for me to the addreſs of Mr. Abraham Walker, pilot at Deal.

Though my health improves, I am not intirely at eaſe in my mind — but let me not give pain to the heart that feels too much for me.

My

My warmeſt affections to Mrs. James, — ſhe is a dear creature — my reſpects to Mr. James — heaven bleſs them both — may the ſmiles of health and proſperity attend them.

God is my eternal friend, to him I look for protection, and while I breathe the air of mortality, my regards are on you — you are my adviſor — my monitor — my better genius — may our reciprocal affections continue pure and unchanged, till the diſſolution of our frail beings — and if an intercourſe is allowed between the ſpirits of the departed, may we enjoy that exalted — that refined, etherial rapture — which the ardent ſeraphims know, while glowing with the emanations of their eternal Creator.

Mayeſt thou enjoy uninterrupted happineſs, till the angel of death wings thee to the regions of bliſs,

Adieu,

ELIZA.

LETTER X.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

TO whom ſhould Eliza apply in her diſtreſs, but to her friend who loves her? why then, my dear, do you apologize for employing me? Yorick would be offended, and with reaſon, if you ever ſent commiſſions to another, which he could execute. I have been with Zumps; and your piano forte muſt be tuned from the braſs middle ſtring of your guittar, which is C.—I have got you a hammer too, and a pair of plyers to twiſt your wire with; and may every one of them, my dear, vibrate ſweet comfort to my hopes! I have bought you ten handſome braſs ſcrews, to hang your neceſſaries upon: I purchaſed twelve; but ſtole a couple from you to put up in my own cabin, at Conwould.—I ſhall never hang, or take my hat off one of them, but I ſhall think of you. I have bought thee, moreover, a couple of iron ſcrews, which are more to be depended on, than braſs, for the globes.

I have written, alſo, to Mr. Abraham Walker, pilot at Deal, that I had diſpatched theſe in a packet, directed to his care; which I deſired he would ſeek after, the moment the Deal machine arrived. I have, moreover, given him directions, what ſort of an arm-chair you would want, and have directed him to purchaſe the beſt that Deal could afford, and

take

take it, with the parcel, in the firſt boat that went off. Would I could, Eliza, ſo ſupply all thy wants and all thy wiſhes! It would be a ſtate of happineſs to me.—The journal is as it ſhould be—all but its contents. Poor, dear, patient being! I do more than pity you; for I think I loſe both firmneſs and philoſophy, as I figure to myſelf your diſtreſſes. Do not think I ſpoke laſt night with too much aſperity of ****; there was cauſe; and beſides, a good heart ought not to love a bad one; and, indeed cannot. But, adieu to the ungrateful ſubject.

I have been this morning to ſee Mrs. James.—She loves thee tenderly, and unfeignedly.—She is alarmed for thee.—She ſays thou looked'ſt moſt ill and melancholy on going away. She pities thee. I ſhall viſit her every Sunday, while I am in town. As this may be my laſt letter, I earneſtly bid thee farewell.—May the God of Kindneſs be kind to thee, and approve himſelf thy protector, now thou art defenceleſs! And, for thy daily comfort, bear in thy mind this truth, that whatever meaſure of ſorrow and diſtreſs is thy portion, it will be repaid to thee in a full meaſure of happineſs, by the Being thou haſt wiſely choſen for thy eternal friend.

Farewell,' farewell, Eliza; whilſt I live, count upon me as the moſt warm and diſintereſted of earthly friends.

YORICK.

LET-

LETTER XI.

ELIZA to YORICK.

My Bramin.

I have received the box — you have taken a deal of trouble — my heart feels your kindneſs, and overflows with gratitude.

The ſhip, I am to ſail with, is extremely neat— my cabin is convenient, but ſmall — it is to be painted white; — ſo I ſhall be obliged to land, in order to accommodate myſelf with a lodging. — I ſhall therefore expect, by every poſt, a continuance of the happineſs which the effuſions of my Bramin's fancy, and his preceptive ſentiments always give me.

May heaven continue your health for the benefit of mankind, and to bleſs Eliza, ſince the effuſions of a friendſhip, at once ſo delicate and rational, are the moſt ſalutary pleaſures that can be felt by the ſenſibility of

Eliza.

LETTER XII.

ELIZA to YORICK.

Dear BRAMIN,

This is my birth day—I am twenty-five years of age—yet years, when paſt, ſeem but as ſo many hours—the moments of anguiſh are the only portions of time, which we can count — we feel their weight — they paſs tediouſly by — we blame them for being tardy, tho' their ſpeed continually takes from the ſpace of our exiſtance.— But how fleeting are the moments in which we enjoy ourſelves—they ſteal unperceived away, and all our pleaſures are but ſhort-lived dreams.

To the mind debaſed by vice, or clouded by doubts, how dreadful muſt the rapidity of time appear—when every minute takes from their much-loved exiſtance, and leads them to be——"They "know not what, they know not where—or, what "is worſe, ſinks them into nothing! Yet even that "nothing appears terrible.„ Such is the Sceptic's ſituation.

But to a ſoul fond of virtue, and ſecured by faith, time's ſwift wings give not a moment's anguiſh. The good wiſh to get rid of the incumbrance of clay, and the pains of mortality, they pant for a diſſolution — time ſeems an enemy, who bars their ſpeedy

ſpeedy paſſage to that deſirable felicity, which is only to be found in the regions of bliſs.

The time I have paſt is nothing — it is now not mine — it is but a blank juſt ſtamped upon the memory.

Then let me prize what yet remains behind — let me learn foreſight from paſt miſcarriages, and riſe to future virtues from former follies — may each revolving ſun ſee me encreaſe in wiſdom, and ſhine on ripening virtues, till I am fitted for that ſtate which is all purity.

I bow before my afflictions with reſignation, and thank the bountiful Author of nature, for ſending me ſuch uſeful monitors.

"Virtue rejoice, tho' heaven may frown awhile,
That frown is but an earneſt of a ſmile;
One day of tears preſages years of joy,
Misfortunes only mend us, not deſtroy;
Who feel the laſhes of an adverſe hour,
Find them but means to waft them into pow'r."

May heaven bleſs my friends and enemies, and give me peace of mind.

ELIZA.

† The above letter was either never anſwered, or the anſwer is loſt.

LETTER XIII.

YORICK to ELIZA.

My dearest Eliza!

I Began a new journal this morning; you ſhall ſee it; for if I live not till your return to England, I will leave it you as a legacy. 'Tis a ſorrowful page; but I will write chearful ones; and could I write letters to thee, they ſhould be chearful ones too: but few, I fear, will reach thee! However, depend upon receiving ſomething of the kind by every poſt; till then, thou waveſt thy hand, and bid'ſt me write no more.

Tell me how you fare; and what ſort of fortitude Heaven inſpires you with. How are you accommodated, my dear? Is all right? Scribble away, any thing, and every thing to me. Depend upon ſeeing me at Deal, with the James's, ſhould you be detained there by contrary winds. — Indeed, Eliza, I ſhould with pleaſure fly to you, could I be the means of rendering you any ſervice, or doing you kindneſs. Gracious and merciful God! conſider the anguiſh of a poor girl. — Strengthen and preſerve her in all the ſhocks her frame muſt be expoſed to. She is now without a protector, but thee! Save her from all accidents of a dangerous element, and give her comfort at the laſt.

My

My prayer, Eliza, I hope, is heard; for the ſky ſeems to ſmile upon me, as I look up to it. I am juſt returned from our dear Mrs. James's, where I have been talking of thee for three hours. — She has got your picture, and likes it: but Marriot, and ſome other judges, agree that mine is the better, and expreſſive of a ſweeter character. But what is that to the original? yet I acknowledge that hers is a picture for the world, and mine is calculated only to pleaſe a very ſincere friend, or ſentimental philoſopher. — In the one, you are dreſſed in ſmiles, and with all the advantages of ſilks, pearls, and ermine; — in the other, ſimple as a veſtal — appearing the good girl nature made you; which, to me, conveys an idea of more unaffected ſweetneſs, than Mrs. Draper, habited for conqueſt, in a birth-day ſuit, with her countenance animated, and her dimples viſible. — If I remember right, Eliza, you endeavoured to collect every charm of your perſon into your face, with more than common care, the day you ſat for Mrs. James. — Your colour too, brightened; and your eyes ſhone with more than uſual brilliancy. I then requeſted you to come ſimple and unadorned when you ſat for me — knowing, as I ſee with unprejudiced eyes, that you could receive no addition from the ſilk-worm's aid, or jeweller's poliſh. Let me now tell you a truth, which, I believe, I have uttered before. — When I firſt ſaw you, I beheld you as an object of compaſſion, and as a very plain woman. The mode of your dreſs,

tho' faſhionable, diſfigured you. — But nothing now could render you ſuch, but the being ſolicitous to make yourſelf admired as a handſome one. — You are not handſome, Eliza, nor is yours a face that will pleaſe the tenth part of your beholders, — but are ſomething more; for I ſcruple not to tell you, I never ſaw ſo intelligent, ſo animated, ſo good a countenance; nor was there, nor ever will be, that man of ſenſe, tenderneſs, and feeling, in your company three hours, that was not, or will not be, your admirer, or friend, in conſequence of it; that is, if you aſſume, or aſſumed no character foreign to your own, but appeared the artleſs being nature deſigned you for. A ſomething in your eyes, and voice, you poſſeſs in a degree more perſuaſive than any woman I ever ſaw, read, or heard of. But it is that bewitching ſort of nameleſs excellence, that men of nice ſenſibility alone can be touched with.

Were your huſband in England, I would freely give him five hundred pounds, if money could purchaſe the acquiſition, to let you only ſit by me two hours in a day, while I wrote my Sentimental Journey. I am ſure the work would ſell ſo much the better for it, that I ſhould be reimburſed the ſum more than ſeven times fold. — I would not give nine pence for the picture of you, the Newnhams have got executed. — It is the reſemblance of a conceited, made-up coquette. Your eyes, and the ſhape of your face, the latter the moſt perfect

oval

oval I ever ſaw, which are perfections, that muſt ſtrike the moſt indifferent judge, becauſe they are equal to any of God's works in a ſimilar way, and finer than any I beheld in all my travels, are manifeſtly injured by the affected leer of the one, and ſtrange appearance of the other; owing to the attitude of the head, which is a proof of the artiſt's or your friend's falſe taſte. The ****'s, who verify the character I once gave of teazing, or ſticking like pitch, or birdlime, ſent a card that they would wait on Mrs. **** on Friday. — She ſent back, ſhe was engaged. — Then to meet at Ranelagh, to-night. — She anſwered, ſhe did not go. — She ſays, if ſhe allows the leaſt footing, ſhe never ſhall get rid of the acquaintance; which ſhe is reſolved to drop at once. She knows them. She knows they are not her friends, nor yours; and the firſt uſe they would make of being with her, would be to ſacrifice you to her, if they could, a ſecond time. Let her not then; let her not, my dear, be a greater friend to thee, than thou art to thyſelf. She begs I will reiterate my requeſt to you, that you will not write to them. It will give her, and thy Bramin, inexpreſſible pain. Be aſſured, all this is not without reaſon on her ſide. I have my reaſons too; the firſt of which is, that I ſhould grieve to exceſs, if Eliza wanted that fortitude her Yorick has built ſo high upon. I ſaid I never more would mention the name to thee; and had I not received it, as a kind of charge, from a dear wo-

man that loves you, I ſhould not have broke my word. I will write again to-morrow to thee, thou beſt and moſt endearing of girls! A peaceful night to thee. My ſpirit will be with thee through every watch of it.

Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

ELIZA to YORICK.

Let me ſee your journal, at leaſt ſend a copy of it, before I leave England — for far, far off be the time deſtined for its deſcending to me as a legacy. — I ſhall be happy to peruſe the ſorrowful pages, they humanize the heart — I feel as you felt, when I read what you pen — and that is to feel with the moſt refined ſenſibility.

The ſympathy of Sentiments beſtows the moſt inexpreſſible pleaſures — ſuch ſorrows are ſorrows to be coveted — when your page compels the tears from my eyes, and makes my heart throb — I will ſay; Here my Bramin wept — when he penn'd this paſſage, he wept — let me catch the pleaſing contagion from each heart-felt ſentence, and bedew the leaf with mutual ſtreaming ſorrows. —

— Then

— Then will I turn to the chearful effuſions of thy imagination — then will I revel in the bright ſallies of thy wit, and calm the pathetic perturbations of my ſoul with thy inimitable humour — the big tear ſhall no longer tremble in my eye — the tender anguiſh ſhall no longer heave my heart, but Yorick ſhall heal the ſorrows the Bramin gave.

Such delectable amuſements ſhall gild the tedious hours of my paſſage — and, by Yorick's aſſiſtance, I ſhall fancy India but half the diſtance from England that it really is.

A kindly ſomething you promiſe, by every poſt — then be aſſured I ſhall never wave my hand to ſtop the ſilent meſſenger, but with open arms receive it.

I am conſiderably better; and, thank heaven, am inſpired with a fortitude, which I hope renders me worthy of the name of your diſciple, of your friend.

My accomodations are tolerable — I cannot complain.

You ſay you ſhall ſee me at Deal with the James's, ſhould I be detained there by contrary winds.

It has been my Petition, ever ſince to the ſupreme Being, to intereſt the elements in my behalf, that I may once more be indulged with the ſight of my friends.

Thus while the captain, the crew, and the other paſſengers, are wiſhing for a favourable gale, I am importuning the heavens to deny their prayer, and ſtill to detain the veſſel from her proceeding on her deſtined voyage.

I will not give my opinion concerning my reſemblance on canvas, in the various ſtyles, deſired by my friends — I ſat to oblige them — and would not on any account obtrude a diſſenting ſtricture on their judgment.

But of this they may reſt aſſured, that however the pictures may appear, the original is their's.

You ſay, when you firſt ſaw me, the mode of my dreſs, tho' faſhionable, diſfigured me.

I thought ſo myſelf — but wore it in compliance with the reigning taſte—there is no pride ſo ſtrong as that which is couched under an affected ſingularity.

Above all things, I would not wiſh to appear ſingular; that is, to be eſſentially abſurd.

When I conſider the diſtinguiſhed friendſhip, with which you honour me, and reflect on that purity of affection which has intereſted you in my moſt trivial concerns, and engaged you to devote your precious moments to my ſervice — I cannot but glory in the compliment you pay me — in ſaying, "You are "not handſome Eliza — nor is yours a face that will "pleaſe the tenth part of your beholders.,,

How

How happy am I not to owe your attachment to frail and fading beauty — but to ſentiment alone.

The compliment is the ſtrongeſt I ever in my life received, or wiſh to receive — it is not compoſed of common place flattery, nor paid to the ſimple features of a face — it is genuine applauſe — it is paid to the head — to the heart.

Yet I muſt not indulge any vanity, ſo far as to take it in its full force to myſelf — you rather draw me as you are prejudiced in my favour, and partial to my defects.

Yet will I often look on my picture as finiſhed by your hand. — I am perſuaded it is what I ought to be. — I will ſtrive to come up to the colouring, in order to be as perfect as my nature will admit, or perhaps as Providence deſigned I ſhould be, during this ſublunary probation.

You mention my huſband, that dear name has made the tide of my blood ebb tumultuouſly towards my heart.—I turn my imagination towards India — ſigh at the diſtance, and could almoſt unſay all that I have ſaid in the former part of my letter.

But why ſhould I revoke a ſingle ſentence, or wiſh to recall one ſentiment — are not love and friendſhip equally ſacred — then learn, Eliza, to keep them both inviolate — to be worthy of ſuch a huſband — ſuch a friend!

Yes,

Yes, my Yorick, my huſband could grant thee my company — if it could be of ſervice to thee, whilſt thou waſt continuing thy ſentimental journey— he would not deprive mankind of the improvement and pleaſure thou art capable of giving them, by denying thee any thing.

Say no more of the ***s — I yield to your ardency — give up every thing to your friendſhip — but quit the ingrateful ſubject — I will not write to them any more.

I ſhall impatiently expect your promiſed letter to-morrow.

Farewell, thou beſt of men, and ſincereſt friend — may heaven protect thy buſy hours, and guard thy more ſecluded moments,

Adieu.

Eight o'clock,
Morn.

LETTER XV.

ELIZA to YORICK.

KIND YORICK,

I am very happy in the company of Miſs L——t, ſhe is an amiable and deſerving young lady.—I am thoroughly ſatisfied that ſhe is to ſail with me.

There is to be of the voyage a military officer in the company's ſervice. — He yeſterday intruded upon us to tea — I did not chuſe to ſhew any reſentment — I rallied him, I told him, that boldneſs was certainly one of the principal requiſites in a ſoldier.

He excuſed his incivility, without confeſſing it with a good grace.

He ſeems to be greatly taken with Miſs L——t, — I dare engage that before we have ſailed together the ſpace of a fortnight, he will be in love with her.

The paſſengers, I am to ſail with, are genteel people, and the officers behave with politeneſs and decorum.

My Yorick, my friend, divides my thoughts with the dear name that duty binds me to. — I often dream

dream of you — remember me in your prayers — think of me waking, and let me, like an illuſion, ſteal through your fancy, while you ſleep. — I am yours — I am yours.

Adieu, adieu.

ELIZA.

P. S. As my ſtay will be ſo ſhort, at leaſt in all probability, take every opportunity to write to me — adieu.

LETTER XVI.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

I think you could act no otherwiſe than you did with the young ſoldier. There was no ſhutting the door againſt him; either in politeneſs or humanity. Thou telleſt me he ſeems ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions: and that before Miſs Light has ſailed a fortnight, he will be in love with her. — Now I think it a thouſand times more likely that he attaches himſelf to thee, Eliza; becauſe thou art a thouſand times more amiable. Fivemonths with Eliza; and in the ſame room; and an amorous ſon of Mars beſides! — "It can no be maſſer," The ſun, if

if he could avoid it, would not ſhine upon a dung-hill; but his rays are ſo pure, Eliza, and celeſtial,— I never heard that they were polluted by it. — Juſt ſuch will thine be, deareſt child, in this, and every ſuch ſituation you will be expoſed to, till thou art fixed for life. — But thy diſcretion, thy wiſdom, thy honour, the ſpirit of thy Yorick, and thy own ſpirit, which is equal to it, will be thy ableſt counſellors.

Surely, by this time, ſomething is doing for thy accommodation. — But why may not clean waſhing and rubbing do, inſtead of painting your cabin, as it is to be hung? Paint is ſo pernicious, both to your nerves and lungs, and will keep you ſo much longer too, out of your apartment; where, I hope, you will paſs ſome of your happieſt hours. —

I fear the beſt of your ſhipmates are only genteel by compariſon with the contraſted crew, with which thou muſt behold them. So was — you know who! — from the ſame fallacy that was put upon the judgment, when — but I will not mortify you. If they are decent, and diſtant, it is enough; and as much as is to be expected. If any of them are more, I rejoice; — thou wilt want every aid; and 'tis thy due to have them. Be cautious only, my dear, of intimacies. Good hearts are open, and fall naturally into them. Heaven inſpire thine with fortitude, in this, and every deadly trial! Beſt of

God's

God's works, farewell! Love me, I beſeech thee; and remember me for ever!

I am, my Eliza, and will ever be, in the moſt comprehenſive ſenſe,

Thy friend,

YORICK

P. S. Probably you will have an opportunity of writing to me by ſome Dutch or French ſhip, or from the Cape de Verd Iſlands — it will reach me ſome how. —

LETTER XVII.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

MY DEAR ELIZA!

Oh! I grieve for your cabin. — And the freſh painting will be enough to deſtroy every nerve about thee. Nothing ſo pernicious as white lead. Take care of yourſelf, dear girl; and ſleep not in it too ſoon. It will be enough to give you a ſtroke of an epilepſy.

I hope you will have left the ſhip; and that my Letters may meet, and greet you, as you get

out of your poſt-chaiſe, at Deal. — When you have got them all, put them, my dear, into ſome order. — The firſt eight or nine, are numbered: but I wrote the reſt without that direction to thee; but thou wilt find them out, by the day or hour, which, I hope, I have generally prefixed to them. When they are got together, in chronological order, ſew them together under a cover. I truſt they will be a perpetual refuge to thee, from time to time; and that thou wilt, when weary of fools, and unintereſting diſcourſe, retire, and converſe an hour with them, and me.

I have not had power, or the heart, to aim at enlivening any one of them, with a ſingle ſtroke of wit or humour; but they contain ſomething better; and what you will feel more ſuited to your ſituation — a long detail of much advice, truth, and knowledge. I hope, too, you will perceive looſe touches of an honeſt heart, in every one of them; which ſpeak more than the moſt ſtudied periods; and will give thee more ground of truſt and reliance upon Yorick, than all that laboured eloquence could ſupply. Lean then thy whole weight, Eliza, upon them and upon me. "May poverty, diſtreſs, anguiſh, and ſhame, be my portion, if ever I give thee reaſon to repent the knowledge of me." — With this aſſeveration, made in the preſence of a juſt God, I pray to him, that ſo it may ſpeed with me, as I deal candidly, and honourably with thee

I would not miſlead thee, Eliza; I would not injure thee, in the opinion of a ſingle individual, for the richeſt crown the proudeſt monarch wears.

Remember, that while I have life and power, whatever is mine, you may ſtyle, and think, your's. Though ſorry ſhould I be, if ever my friendſhip was put to the teſt thus, for your own delicacy's ſake. — Money and counters, are of equal uſe, in my opinion, they both ſerve to ſet up with.

I hope you will anſwer me this letter; but if thou art debarred by the elements, which hurry thee away, I will write one for thee; and knowing it is ſuch a one as thou would'ſt have written, I will regard it as my Eliza's.

Honour, and happineſs, and health, and comforts of every kind, ſail along with thee, thou moſt worthy of girls! I will live for thee, and my Lydia — be rich for the dear children of my heart — gain wiſdom, gain fame, and happineſs, to ſhare with them — with thee — and her, in my old age. — Once for all, adieu. Preſerve thy life; ſteadily purſue the ends we propoſed; and let nothing rob thee of thoſe powers Heaven has given thee for thy well being.

What can I add more, in the agitation of mind I am in, and within five minutes of the laſt poſtman's bell, but recommend thee to Heaven, and recom-

recommend myſelf to Heaven with thee, in the ſame fervent ejaculation "that we may be happy, and meet again; if not in this world, in the next." — Adieu, — I am thine, Eliza, affectionately, and everlaſtingly.

YORICK.

LETTER XVIII.

ELIZA TO YORICK.

MY YORICK.

I hope your fears, reſpecting my health, on account of my cabin being new painted, will prove groundleſs. — But as it will give my Yorick pleaſure — I promiſe to take care of myſelf, particular care for his ſake.

I have received your letters with heartfelt ſatisfaction — I received them, and have arragned them in chronological order, as you directed me—I found no difficulty in doing it, as the dates ſupplied any deficiency in the numbering.

I have put them under a cover—I will wear them next my heart — they ſhall, indeed, be my refuge my kind ſilent monitors — I will peruſe them with

reverence, and obey them with reſpect — I have already treaſured them in my memory, and experienced their efficacy.

While they are animated by knowledge and truth, thy honeſt heart appears in every line, and makes them glow with ſenſibility. — Mine reverberates to every ſentence, and ſympathizes with thine. — I return thy aſſerveration with equal ſincerity, and imprecate the ſame wrath, if my candour is not equal to thine.

You ſay. "If thou art debarred by the ele-"ments, which hurry thee away, I will write one, "a letter, for thee, and knowing it is ſuch a one, "as thou wouldſt have written, — I will regard it "as my Eliza's.

Do, my Yorick, when I have left the Britiſh ſhore — while I am combating the uncertainty of the boiſterous elements — when I can no longer behold the white cliffs of thy native land, a land happy in thy birth, do write a letter for thy Eliza — Stretch thy imagination to its utmoſt extent — fancy all that is tender, delicate, kind and pure — fancy the moſt ſeraphic affection, and believe the powers of thy imagination cannot exceed the dictates of my heart.

You ejaculate, "May we be happy, and meet "again — if not in this world, in the next."

I extend the petition, "May we again meet, "both here and hereafter."

ELIZA.

LETTER XIX.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

I wiſh to God, Eliza, it was poſſible to poſtpone the voyage to India, for another year. — For I am firmly perſuaded within my own heart, that thy huſband could never limit thee with regard to time.

I fear that Mr. B — has exaggerated matters. I like not his countenance. It is abſolutely killing. — Should evil befall thee, what will he not have to anſwer for? I know not the being that will be deſerving of ſo much pity; or that I ſhall hate more. He will be an outcaſt, alien. — In which caſe I will be a father to thy children, my good girl! — therefore take no thought about them. —

But, Eliza, if thou art ſo very ill, ſtill put of all thoughts of returning to India this year.— Write

to your huſband, — tell him the truth of your caſe. If he is the generous, humane man you deſcribe him to be, he cannot but applaud your conduct. — I am credibly informed, that his repugnance to your living in England, ariſes only from the dread which has entered his brain, that thou mayſt run him in debt, beyond thy appointments, and that he muſt diſcharge them — that ſuch a creature ſhould be ſacrificed for the paltry conſideration of a few hundreds is too, too hard! Oh! my child, that I could, with propriety indemnify him for every charge, even to the laſt mite, that thou haſt been of to him! With joy would I give him my whole ſubſiſtence — nay, ſequeſter my livings, and truſt the treaſures Heaven has furniſhed my head with, for a future ſubſiſtence. —

You owe much, I allow, to your huſband, — you owe ſomething to appearances, and the opinion of the world; but, truſt me, my dear, you owe much likewiſe to yourſelf. — Return therefore, from Deal, if you continue ill. — I will preſcribe for you, gratis. — You are not the firſt woman, by many, I have done ſo for, with ſucceſs. I will ſend for my wife and daughter, and they ſhall carry you, in purſuit of health, to Montpelier, the wells of Bancois, the Spa, or whither thou wilt. Thou ſhalt direct them, and make parties of pleaſure in what corner of the world fancy points out to thee. We ſhall fiſh upon the banks of Arno, and loſe ourſelves

ves in the ſweet labyrinths of its vallies.— And then thou ſhould'ſt warble to us, as I have once or twice hear'd thee.— "I'm loſt, I'm loſt" — but we ſhould find thee again, my Eliza. — Of a ſimilar nature to this, was your phyſician's preſcription: "Uſe gentle exerciſe, the pure ſouthern air of France, or milder Naples — with the ſociety of friendly gentle beings." Senſible man! He certainly entered into your feelings. He knew the fallacy of medicine to a creature, whoſe illneſs has ariſen from the affliction of her mind. Time only, my dear, I fear you muſt truſt to, and have your reliance on; may it give you the health ſo enthuſiaſtic a votary to the charming goddeſs deſerves.

I honour you, Eliza, for keeping ſecret ſome things, which if explained, had been a panegyric on yourſelf. There is a dignity in venerable affliction, which will not allow it to appeal to the world for pity, or redreſs. Well have you ſupported that character, my amiable, philoſophic friend! And, indeed, I begin to think you have as many virtues as my uncle Toby's widow. — I don't mean to inſinuate, huſſey, that my opinion is no better founded than his was of Mrs. Wadman; nor do I conceive it poſſible for any Trim to convince me it is equally fallacious. — I am ſure, while I have my reaſon, it is not. — Talking of widows — pray, Eliza, if ever you are ſuch, do not think of giving yourſelf to ſome wealthy nabob — becauſe I deſign

to marry you myſelf. — My wife cannot live long — ſhe has ſold all the provinces in France already — and I know not the woman I ſhould like ſo well for her ſubſtitute as yourſelf. — 'Tis true, I am ninety-five in conſtitution, and you but twenty-five—rather too great a diſparity this! but what I want in youth, I will make up in wit and good humour. — Not Swift ſo loved his Stella, Scarron his Maintenon, or Waller his Sachariſſa, as I will love, and ſing thee, my wife elect! All thoſe names, eminent as they were, ſhall give place to thine, Eliza. Tell me in anſwer to this, that you approve and honour the propoſal, and that you would, like the Spectator's miſtreſs, have more joy in putting on an old man's ſlipper than aſſociating with the gay, the voluptuous, and the young. — Adieu, my Simplicia!

Yours,

TRISTRAM.

LETTER XX.

ELIZA to YORICK.

My Tristram.

I would oblige you in any thing practicable—with any thing within the line of my duty; — but it is impoſſible to poſtpone my voyage — my orders are irrevocable — I muſt ſubmit.

Mr. B— did not exaggerate — but I am better— my children I therefore hope will not be orphans — but I thank thee, however, for the generoſity of thy idea concerning them — it was exalted.

Indeed you have been miſinformed concerning my huſband's temper — he is not of that parſimonious diſpoſition which you imagine.— If my expences only were in queſtion, I might continue to breathe the air of Europe — but more tender conſiderations urge him to preſs my return to India — I am not made a pecuniary ſacrifice.

You allow I owe much to my huſband — I follow but the dictates of my duty to diſcharge that debt — the moſt ſacred debt of which we know, and contracted in the moſt ſolemn manner.

I confeſs much is due to appearances, and the opinion of the world, yet not to wrong thoſe ap-

pearances, and that opinion — not to take from what is due to myſelf, I would, if circumſtances permitted, I would indeed turn from Deal to pay what is due to friendſhip.

You ſhould preſcribe for me — but not corporeally — let thoſe do it whoſe buſineſs it is — let them have their perquiſites, and fatten on the anguiſh of the valetudinary, while my Yorick aſſumed to himſelf the nobler taſk of preſcribing to the mind, and eradicating the diſorders of the ſoul — that is the taſk he can perform unrivaled, and for which heaven peculiarly deſigned him, and lent his talents to benefit an unfeeling — a depraved world.

May thy wife and daughters be better employed, than in adminiſtring to the anguiſh of thy Indian — may they be the means and partakers of thy domeſtic happineſs — if they felt as I feel, they would think every toil a pleaſure which gave thee comfort.

I cannot think, let phyſicians preſcribe as they pleaſe, that change of place could relieve me — I have tried it from one ſide of the globe to the other, without ſucceſs — therefore Britain, and thy converſe would certainly prove as efficacious, as the air of France and Naples — but my continuance here will be impoſſible.

Anguiſh of mind, as you juſtly intimate, perhaps, proceeding from too great a degree of ſenſibility,

ſibility, and being conſtitutionally ailing, will, in my caſe, baffle the preſcriptions of art, and the experience of the moſt able phyſicians.

You ſay, "There is a dignity in venerable affliction, which will not allow it to appeal to the "world for pity or redreſs." —— You ſpeak from my heart, you have taken my ſentiment — oh! may I never be compelled to ſeek redreſs from the world, or be ſo unfortunate as to merit indiſcriminate pity.

If I am pitied — let it be by thee! — Yet I would not wiſh thee to pity any thing.

Thy worthy heart is ſo tender, that I am ſenſible, ſhouldſt thou have occaſion to pity any one, that thy anguiſh would be more ſevere than that felt by the object of thy ſenſibility. — I would wiſh none but the flinty breaſted to feel pity, and they are incapable of it.

But you grow merry — you aſk, If ever I ſhould become a widow, heaven avert the hour! whether I would marry again? Whether I would give my hand to ſome rich Nabob.

I think I never ſhould give my hand again — as I am afraid my heart would not go with it. — But as to Nabobs, I deſpiſe them all — thoſe who pretend to be Chriſtians, I mean.

Have

Have they not depopulated towns — laid waſte villages, and deſolated the plains of my native country? —— Alas! they have fertilized the immenſe fields of India, with the blood of its inhabitants — they have ſacrificed the lives of millions of my countrymen to their inſatiable avarice — rivers of blood ſtream for vengeance againſt them — widows and orphans ſupplicate heaven for revenge.

Then can thoſe ſpirits, who have waded through blood, to gain riches and power, be congenial with the ſoul of Eliza, — could Yorick's hapleſs Indian bear the idea of an union with the murderers of her countrymen — no — ſhame and poverty be firſt my portion.

Riches, as the origin of luxury, and ſupport of the gaudy trappings of pride, I contemn. — Gold is beneficial only in the hands of virtue, when the benevolent hand is extended to petitionary diſtreſs — or when ſoft-eyed humanity ſeeks the cottage of affliction to

"Shine its ſuperfluity away" —

to diffuſe its bleſſings around, and bid the big tear of joy ſtart from the eye of ſorrow, and trickle down the woe-wan cheeks that begin to glow with the warmth of gratitude.

Yes, my Bramin, were I a widow — and thou a widower — I think I would give my hand to thee, pre-

preferable to any man exiſting — I would unite in the purity of heart, with my monitor — I would wed thy ſoul — my mind ſhould adopt thy ſentiments, and become congenial with thy own, and

"My rough genious ſhould at length refine,
Acquiring worth by imitating thine;
With thee I'd wander o'er the hiſtoric page,
And view the changing ſcenes of every age.
Or led by thee, the lateſt tracts explore
Of grave philoſophy's extenſive lore;
Or now reclin'd in the Sylvean bow'r,
With peaceful bards, enjoy the bliſsful hour."

What matter diſparity of years, reſpecting the mortal part? The ſoul, that ray of immortality, is always young; and I am certain, thy ſoul is more vigorous than what the generality of mankind can boaſt.

If any part of thee is old, it is the moſt inſignificant. — The moſt valuable part is in all the vernal bloom of youthful prime.

A great poet ſays,

"For love no certain cauſe can be aſſign'd,
"Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind."

And may not I improve the idea — may not I ſay, —

Why

Why ſhould one thought on years unequal waſte,
Love's not in age, but in the lover's taſte;
If time towards the grave the body bring,
The ſoul ſhines forth in all the charms of ſpring.
Then let not frail corruption touch my heart,
I claim the ſoul, and love th' immortal part.

But rhapſody aſide — I hope Mrs. Sterne will out-live every idea of ſuch an union. — You ſay; She has ſold all the provinces in France — I am glad of it — that ſhe may the ſooner purchaſe the fee ſimple of her health in her native air.

However, I honour thy ſlipper, and really prefer it to any aſſociation with the gay, the voluptuous, and the young — but I would not have Mrs. Sterne put if off too ſoon, for the ſake of thy domeſtic happineſs.

Without joking, I am ſeriouſly, and with ſincerity, in the utmoſt purity of affection, thine moſt unalterably,

ELIZA.

P. S. My heart will beat with impatience for an anſwer — be expeditious to eaſe its throbbings.

LETTER XXI.

YORICK TO ELIZA.

MY DEAR ELIZA!

I have been within the verge of the gates of death. — I was ill the laſt time I wrote to you; and apprehenſive of what would be the conſequence. — My fears were but too well founded; for in ten minutes after I diſpatched my letter, this poor, fine ſpun frame of Yorick's gave way, and I broke a veſſel in my breaſt, and could not ſtop the loſs of blood till four this morning. I have filled all thy India handkerchiefs with it.— It came, I think, from my heart! I fell aſleep, through weakneſs. At ſix I awoke; with the boſom of my ſhirt ſteeped in tears. I dreamt I was ſitting under the canopy of Indolence, and that thou cameſt into the room, with a ſhaul in thy hand, and told me, my ſpirit had flown to thee in the Downs, with tidings of my fate; and that you were come to adminiſter what conſolation filial affection could beſtow, and to receive my parting breath and bleſſing. — With that you folded the ſhaul about my waiſt, and, kneeling, ſupplicated my attention. I awoke; but in what a frame! Oh! my God! my God! "But thou wilt number my tears, and put them all into thy bottle." — Dear girl! I ſee thee, — thou art for ever preſent

ſent to my fancy, embracing my feeble knees, and raiſing thy fine eyes to bid me be of comfort: and when I talk to Lydia, the words of Eſau, as uttered by thee, perpetually ring in my ears — "Bleſs me even alſo, my father!" — Bleſſing attend thee, thou child of my heart!

My bleeding is quite ſtopped, and I feel the principle of life ſtrong within me, ſo be not alarmed, Eliza — I know I ſhall do well. I have eat my breakfaſt with hunger; and I write to thee with a pleaſure ariſing from that prophetic impreſſion in my imagination, that "all will terminate to our heart's content." Comfort thyſelf eternally with this perſuaſion, "that the beſt of beings, as thou haſt ſweetly expreſſed it, could not, by a combination of accidents, produce ſuch a chain of events, merely to be the ſource of miſery to the leading perſon engaged in them." The obſervation was very applicable, very good, and very elegantly expreſſed. I wiſh my memory did juſtice to the wording of it. — Who taught you the art of writing ſo ſweetly, Eliza? — You have abſolutely exalted it to a ſcience! When I am in want of ready caſh, and ill health will permit my genius to exert itſelf, I ſhall print your letters, as finiſhed eſſays, "by an unfortunate Indian lady." The ſtyle is new; and would almoſt be a ſufficient recommendation for their ſelling well, without merit — but their ſenſe, natural eaſe, and ſpirit, is not to be equalled, I believe,

believe, in this ſection of the globe; nor, I will anſwer for it, by any of your country women in your's. — I have ſhewed your letter to Mrs. B —, and to half the literati in town. — You ſhall not be angry with me for it, becauſe I meant to do you honour by it. — You cannot imagine how many admirers your epiſtolary productions have gained you, that never viewed your external merits. I only wonder where thou could'ſt acquire thy graces, thy goodneſs, thy accompliſhments — ſo connected! ſo educated! Nature has, ſurely, ſtudied to make thee her peculiar care — for thou art, and not in my eyes alone, the beſt and faireſt of all her works.—

And ſo, this is the laſt letter thou art to receive from me; becauſe the Earl of Chatham, I read in the papers, is got to the Downs; and the wind, I find, is fair. If ſo — bleſſed woman! take my laſt, laſt farewell! — Cheriſh the remembrance of me; think how I eſteem, nay, how affectionately I love thee, and what a price I ſet upon thee! Adieu, adieu! and with my adieu — let me give thee one ſtreight rule of conduct, that thou haſt heard from my lips in a thouſand forms — but I concenter it in one word,

REVERENCE THYSELF.

Adieu, once more, Eliza! May no anguiſh of heart plant a wrinkle upon thy face, till I behold

it again! May no doubt or miſgivings diſturb the ſerenity of thy mind, or awaken a painful thought about thy children — for they are Yorick's — and Yorick is thy friend for ever! Adieu, adieu, adieu!

P. S. Remember, that Hope ſhortens all journies, by ſweetening them; — ſo ſing my little ſtanza on the ſubject, with the devotion of an hymn, every morning when thou ariſeſt, and thou wilt eat thy breakfaſt with more comfort for it.

Bleſſings, reſt, and Hygeia go with thee! May'ſt thou ſoon return, in peace and affluence, to illumine my night! I am, and ſhall be, the laſt to deplore thy loſs, and will be the firſt to congratulate, and hail thy return. —

FARE THEE WELL!

LETTER XXII.

ELIZA TO YORICK.

MY BRAMIN,

This is the laſt letter thou wilt receive from me, while I am within ſight of the Britiſh ſhore — the land of freedom, and benevo'ence — the land which, to its own glory be it ſpoken, gave my Yorick being.

I was terrified when I opened your laſt letter; — your illneſs gave me the moſt genuine concern.

To break a blood veſſel in thy breaſt — dreadful! — I was alarmed at the intelligence, and my blood thrilled in my veins, and curdled near my heart, when I read it.

O that my India handkerchiefs had been ſtyptic, to give thee eaſe. — I was happy to read you had ſlept — but your dream — heaven render it improphetic — heaven keep me from the painful office of adminiſtering to your diſſolution.

Thy tears I will treaſure in my bottle, or at leaſt, I will weep for thee — fill it with my tears, and call them thine, as they are unfeignedly ſhed upon thy account.

Your imagination images to my feelings — you behold me in fancy in the very ſupplicating poſture I ſhould aſſume, were I near you—I ſhould embrace! embrace! your knees, and look as if I bade

you be of comfort — for I ſhould only look — I ſhould be unable to ſpeak.

I join with thee in bleſſing the child of thy heart — thy Lydia.

And all praiſe be given to that bountiful Being, who has healed thy diſorder, and ſtopped thy bleeding — who bade thee again "feel the principle of "life ſtrong within thee."

All will certainly terminate to our hearts content — to think otherwiſe, is to entertain an ill opinion of an omnipotent Being — who is all wiſe — all merciful, and all good, whoſe benignity is equal to his power, and both are unbounded.

You may inquire, who taught me the art of writing — it was even my Yorick! — if I have any claim to merit — if my ſtyle is, as you are pleaſed to ſay, new — if the eaſe and ſpirit of my compoſitions are not to be equalled — the praiſe is entirely due to yourſelf.

I have taken the utmoſt pains to ſteal your ſentiments — your manner — the delicacy of your expreſſions — the eaſy flow of your thoughts — the purity of your diction — in fine, I have in my writings aimed as much as poſſible to be Yorick.

But I cannot think my ſtyle equal to what your prejudice in my favour perſuades you it is; — I can perceive manifeſt faults in my compoſitions myſelf. I am not laying a trap for future plaudits, indeed I am not. — I beg that our correſpondence may be from

from the heart, not of the heart; — therefore no compliments.

I muſt, however, chide — I muſt, my Yorick, — for ſhewing my letters. — You tell me, you have ſhewn them to Mrs. B —, and to half the literati in town; — indeed you have been to blame — ſo to expoſe your Eliza's weakneſs.

She bares her heart to thee — ſhe lays it entirely open — but ſhe would not have it ſhewn ſo naked to every one in the fullneſs of her ſincerity. — Many things may ſlip from her unſpecting pen, which ſhe would not have known to any one, who could not, like thee, make great allowances in her favor — and pardon the weakneſs of her nature.

You ſay, "You cannot imagine how many admirers your epiſtolary productions have gained you."

Falſe flattery! — Their encomiums are illuſive — it is to you their compliments are paid — they find you are blind to my errors — they perceive you implicitly admire all that comes from me — they pretend to coincide with your opinion, not to give you any uneaſineſs — they admire — they reverence you — they will not mortify you, by declaring that any being you are pleaſed to think perfect, is not ſo.

It is the reſpect due to the merits of my Yorick, that occaſions the many compliments paid to the trifling deſerts of his Eliza.

We are in the Downs — the wind is fair — we ſhall ſail this evening — the captain has juſt informed

me ſo — I therefore took this opportunity to pour the effuſions of my heart to thee in haſte.

Farewell, worthieſt of men — feeling being, thou art all ſentiment — farewell — I will — I will cheriſh the remembrance of thee! — You tell me how you eſteem me — how affectionately you love me — what a price you ſet upon me.

I eſteem thee with equal ardor — I love thee with equal affection — I prize thee as ardently — let me be ever dear to thy heart — and an inhabitant of thy memory.

I will reverence myſelf for my Yorick's ſake — I will, my Yorick, who is my friend for ever.

I will ſing thy little ſtanza to Hope in my matin and evening oriſons — yet I cannot help deploring our ſeparation.

Farewell, my Bramin — my faithful monitor, Farewell.

May proſperity attend thee, and peace crown thy days with felicity.

Thine affectionately,
Thine everlaſtingly,
Adieu, adieu, adieu,

ELIZA.

P. S. I will, if poſſible, write by ſome ſhip bound to England,

STERNE'S LETTERS

TO

HIS FRIENDS

ON

VARIOUS OCCASIONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

HIS HISTORY

OF A

WATCH COAT,

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON,
Printed for A. T. TAYLOR
1788.

INTRODUCTION.

The enſuing letters have been ſome years in the poſſeſſion of the Editor; their publication was deferred, as he was in daily expectation that time and opportunity would happily have been productive of a larger acquiſition; but deſpairing of any further ſucceſs, he has ventured to preſent them to the public, with whom he muſt ſincerely regret the loſs we ſuſtain by not retrieving a larger correſpondence.

The odious light in which many poſthumous publications are deſervedly viewed, by the deſcerning few, would have ſunk theſe letters in oblivion, if they had reflected the leaſt diſcredit on the morals or literary merit of an author who ſo juſtly deſerves the very diſtinguiſhed attention he has received; but, on the contrary, as they reflect honour on the author in every capacity, and place him in the moſt pleaſing point of view, and as they carry with them evident and convincing marks of ori-

ginality, he thinks the moſt incredulous muſt applaud his undertaking, and be fully ſatisfied of their authenticity, as he would be always happy to add to, rather than diminiſh the luſtre of literary fame; thinking it almoſt as criminal to commit a literary as a corporal murder.

Some apology may be thought neceſſary for ſubjoining the laſt letter, as it has already appeared in a ſmall pamphlet about ſeven years ago; but as it was never attended to for want of being ſufficiently known, the editor hopes the public will unite with him in wiſhing not a daſh of his author's pen might be loſt; for which reaſon he could not reſiſt the temptation of preſerving it, though it might be of a temporary nature. — The following account of it is taken from ſome anecdotes of Mr. Sterne's life, lately publiſhed, and prefixed to the before-mentioned pamphlet, as an advertiſement.

—— "For ſome time Mr. Sterne lived, in a retired manner, upon a ſmall curacy in Yorkſhire, and, probably, would have remained in the ſame obſcu-

obſcurity, if his lively genius had not diſplayed itſelf upon an occaſion which ſecured him a friend, and paved the way for his promotion. — A perſon who filled a lucrative benefice, was not ſatisfied with enjoying it during his own life-time, but exerted all his intereſt to have it intailed on his wife and ſon after his deceaſe: the gentleman that expected the reverſion of this poſt was Mr. Sterne's friend, who had not, however, ſufficient influence to prevent the ſucceſs of his adverſary. — At this time Sterne's ſatirical pen operated ſo ſtrongly, that the intended monopolizer informed him, if he would ſuppreſs the publication of his ſarcaſm, he would reſign his pretenſions to the next candidate."

The title of this piece, it appears, was to have been, "The Hiſtory of a good warm Watch Coat, "with which the preſent Poſſeſſor is not content to "cover his own ſhoulders, unleſs he can cut out "of it, a Petticoat for his Wife, and a pair of "Breeches for his Son."

Whenever genius is diſtinguiſhed, it will, naturally, excite our attention. — No man ever claimed

a greater right to that attention than the author of Triſtram: — a natural vivacity, united with a ſentimental delicacy, and a tenderneſs felt by every ſuſceptible ſoul, deſerves commendation: we muſt rank Sterne as one of the moſt celebrated originals. "He plays with the fancy, and ſometimes, perhaps, too wantonly; but, while he thus deſignedly maſks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart, refines it, amends it, ſoftens it, beats down each ſelfiſh barrier from about it, and opens every ſource of pity and benevolence." — This is the true characteriſtic of our Author, whoſe poignant wit, and ſentimental tenderneſs, will ever immortalize his memory, while taſte exiſts; and, though I muſt, unwillingly, ſubſcribe to the opinion of my Author, that "It is not in the power of every one to taſte "humour, however he may wiſh it. — It is the gift of God;" — yet, I truſt, the majority of my readers are poſſeſſed of that gift, and will heartily rejoice, with me, in the opportunity of preſerving theſe marks of genius, and handing them to poſterity.

*LETTER I.

Thurſday 11 'Clock at Night.

DEAR SIR,

—— 'Twas for all the world like a cut acroſs my finger with a ſharp knife — I ſaw the blood — gave it a ſuck — wrapt it up — and thought no more about it —

—— But there is more goes to the healing of a wound than this comes to; — a wound, unleſs it is a wound not worth talking of, but by-the-bye mine is, muſt give you ſome pain after — nature will take her own way with it — it muſt ferment — it muſt digeſt ——

—— The ſtory you told me of Triſtram's pretended tutor this morning — (My letter, by rights, ſhould have ſet out with this ſentence — and then the

* A friend of the Author of the Divine Legation ſuſpecting, from report, that Sterne had a deſign to make that learned prelate Tristram's Tutor, in the continuation of his work; hinted his ſuſpicions to him in a letter, to which this is an anſwer.

the ſimile would not have kept you a moment in ſuſpence) — this vile ſtory, I ſay, though I then ſaw both how and where it wounded — I felt little from it at firſt — or, to ſpeak more honeſtly, though it ruins my ſimile, I felt a great deal of pain from it, but affected an air uſual on ſuch accidents, of leſs feeling than I had —

I have now got home to my lodgings, and have been unwrapping this ſelf-ſame wound of mine, and ſhaking my head over it this half hour. — What the devil! Is there no one learned blockhead throughout the many ſchools of miſapplied ſcience in the chriſtian world to make a tabour of for my Triſtram? — Ex quovis ligno non fit. — Are we ſo run out of ſtock, that there is no one lumber-headed, muddle-headed, mortar-headed, pudding-headed chap amongſt our doctors? — Is there no one ſingle wight, of much reading and no learning, amongſt the many children in my mother's nurſery, who bids high for this charge, but I muſt diſable my judgment by chooſing a W — ? — Vengeance! have I ſo little concern for the honour of my hero? Am I a wretch ſo void of ſenſe, ſo bereft of feeling for the figure he is to make in ſtory, that I ſhould chooſe a preceptor to rob him of all the immortality I intended him? O my dear friend!

Malice is ingenious — unleſs where the exceſs of it out-wits itſelf — I have two comforts in this ſtroke

ke of it;— the firſt is, that this one is partly of this kind; and ſecondly, that it is one of the number of thoſe which ſo unfairly brought poor Yorick to his grave. — The report might draw blood of the Author of Triſtram Shandy — but could not harm ſuch a man as the Author of the Divine Legation — God bleſs him! though by-the-bye, and according to the natural courſe of deſcents, the bleſſing ſhould come from him to me.

Pray have you no intereſt lateral or collateral to get me introduced to his Lordſhip?

Why do you aſk?

My dear Sir, I have no claim to ſuch an honour, but what ariſes from the honour, and reſpect, which, in the progreſs of my work, will be ſhewn the world I owe to ſo great a man. Whilſt I am talking of owing — I wiſh, dear Sir, that any body would tell you — how much I am indebted to you — I am determined never to do it myſelf, or ſay more upon the ſubject than this, that I am yours,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER II.

From Dr. Euſtace in America, to the Rev. Mr. Sterne, with a Walking Stick.

SIR!

When I aſſure you that I am a great admirer of Triſtram Shandy, and have, ever ſince his introduction into the world, been one of his moſt zealous defenders againſt the repeated aſſaults of prejudice and miſapprehenſion, I hope you will not treat this unexpected appearance in his company as an intruſion.

You know it is an obſervation, as remarkable for its truth as for its antiquity, that a ſimilitude of ſentiments is the general parent of friendſhip. — It cannot be wondered at, that I ſhould conceive an eſteem for a perſon whom nature had moſt indulgently enabled to friſk and curvet with eaſe through all theſe intricacies of ſentiments, which from irreſiſtible propenſity, ſhe had impelled me to trudge through without merit or diſtinction.

The only reaſon that gave riſe to this addreſs to you, is my accidentally having met with a piece of true Shandean ſtatuary, I mean according to vulgar opinion, for to ſuch judges both appear equally deſtitute of regularity or deſign. — It was made by a very

very ingenious gentleman of this province, and preſented to the late Governor Dobbs, after his death Mr. D. gave it me: its ſingularity made many deſirous of procuring it, but I had reſolved, at firſt, not to part with it, till, upon reflection, I thought it would be a very proper and probably not an unacceptable compliment to my favourite author, and in his hands might prove as ample a field for meditation as a button-hole, or a broomſtick.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER III.

Mr. Sterne's Anſwer.

London, Febr. 9, 1768.

SIR,

I this moment received your obliging letter and Shandean piece of ſculpture along with it, of both which teſtimonies of your regard I have the juſteſt ſenſe, and return you, dear Sir, my beſt thanks and acknowledgement. Your walking ſtick is in no ſenſe more Shandaick, than in that of its having more handles than one; the parallel breaks only in this, that in uſing the ſtick every one will take the hand-

le which ſuits his convenience. In Triſtram Shandy the handle is taken, which ſuits the paſſions, their ignorance, or their ſenſibility. There is ſo little true feeling in the herd of the world, that I wiſh I could have got an act of parliament, when the books firſt appeared, that none but wiſe men ſhould look into them. It is too much to write books, and find heads to underſtand them; the world, however, ſeems to come into a better temper about them, the people of genius here, being to a man on its ſide; and the reception it has met with in France, Italy, and Germany, has engaged one part of the world to give it a ſecond reading. The other, in order to be on the ſtrongeſt ſide, has at length agreed to ſpeak well of it too. A few hypocrites and tartuffes, whoſe approbation could do it nothing but diſhonour, remain unconverted.

I am very proud, Sir, to have had a man like you on my ſide from the beginning; but it is not in the power of every one to taſte humour, however he may wiſh it; it is the gift of God: and, beſides, a true feeler always brings half the entertainment along with him; his own ideas are only called forth by what he reads, and the vibrations within him, intirely correſpond with thoſe excited. — 'Tis like reading himſelf — and not the book.

In a week's time I ſhall be delivered of two volumes of the Sentimental Travels of Mr. Yorick through

through France and Italy; but, alas! the ſhip ſails three days too ſoon, and I have but to lament, it deprives me of the pleaſure of preſenting them to you. —

Believe me, dear Sir, with great thanks for the honour you have done me, with true eſteem,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER IV.

To * * * * * * * * *

It is even as you told me, my good friend, — a beckon from an old female acquaintance has led me a dance to * * * * *. It was too great a temptation to be thrown in the way of ſuch a ſinner; — ſo I have bid adieu to Shandy Hall till the beginning of October — which, by-the-bye, is one of the fineſt months in the year in this part of the kingdom — this is added, by the way, to induce you to return to me at that time: if you cannot, let me know where you are to be the beginning of the following month, and the wheels of my chariot ſhall roll rapidly towards you.

I have not been quite idle ſince you left me, but, amidſt a thouſand impediments, have ſnatched one volume more for a gouty and a ſplenetic world. I ſuppoſe this will overtake you at the Hot-wells, as you are walking a ſentimental foot-pace beſide ſome phthiſical nymph of the fountain — if ſo — protect and cheriſh her, whoſoever ſhe be; and tell her, that ſhe has Triſtram Shandy's wiſhes for her recovery and happineſs. — Had I lived in days of yore, when virtue and ſentiment bore a price, I ſhould have been the moſt peerleſs knight of them all! — Some tender-hearted damſel in diſtreſs would ever have been my object: to wipe away the tears from off the cheek of ſuch a friendleſs fair one, I would go to Mecca — and for a friend — to the end of the world. —

In this laſt ſentiment my beſt friend was uppermoſt in my thoughts!

But wherefore do I think of arms and Dulcineas, — when, alas, my ſpear is grown ruſty, and is fit only to be hung in the old family hall, among piſtols without cocks, and helmets that have loſt their vizard.

As for my health, which you ſo kindly inquire after — I cannot brag of it — it is not ſo well with me this year as it was the laſt — and I fear I have little on my ſide but laughter and good ſpirits! Theſe

ſe have ſtood me in great ſtead for twenty years paſt, how long they may be able to keep the field, and prolong the combat — for at beſt it is but prolonging a conteſt, which muſt at laſt end in their defeat, — I know not! — Nevertheleſs, for the days that are paſt, as well as thoſe which are to come, I will eat my bread in peace: and be it but bread and water, and I have ſuch a friend as you, I will find a way, ſome how or other, to make merry over it.

Adieu,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER V.

To * * * * * * * *

—— The firſt time I have dipped my pen into the inkhorn is to write to you — and to thank you moſt ſincerely for your kind epiſtle! — Will this be a ſufficient apology for my letting it lay ten days upon the table without anſwering it? — I truſt it will; — I am ſure my own feelings tell me ſo; — becauſe I feel it to be impoſſible for me to do any thing that is ungracious towards you. It is not every hour, or day, or week, in a man's life, that is a fit ſeaſon

for the duties of friendſhip: -- ſentiment is not always at hand — folly and pride, and what is called buſineſs, oftentimes keep it at a diſtance: and without ſentiment, what is friendſhip? – a name! — a ſhadow! — But, to prevent a miſapplication of all this, though why ſhould I fear it from ſo kind and gentle a ſpirit as yours? you muſt know, that by the careleſſneſs of my curate, or his wife, or his maid, or ſome one within his gates, the parſonage-houſe at —— was, about a fortnight ago, burnt to the ground, with the furniture which belonged to me, and a pretty good collection of books — the loſs about three hundred and fifty pounds. — The poor man, with his wife, took the wings of the next morning and fled away. — This has given me real vexation; -- for ſo much was my pity and eſteem for him, that as ſoon as I heard of the diſaſter, I ſent to deſire he would come and take his abode with me, 'till another habitation was ready to receive him, — but he was gone; and, as I am told, for fear of my perſecution — Heavens! how little did he know me, to ſuppoſe; that I was among the number of thoſe wretches, who heap misfortune on misfortune, — and when the load is almoſt inſupportable ſtill add to the weight. — God, who reads my heart, knows it to be true, that I wiſh rather to ſhare than to increaſe the burden of the miſerable, — to dry up inſtead of adding a ſingle drop to the ſtream of ſorrow. — As to the dirty traſh of this world, I regard it not; the loſs of it does not coſt me a ſigh—

for

for, after all, I may ſay with the Spaniſh Captain, that I am as good a gentleman as the King, only not quite ſo rich. — But to the point. —

Shall I expect you here this ſummer? I much wiſh that you may make it convenient to gratify me in a viſit for a few weeks. I will give you a roaſt fowl for your dinner, and a clean table-cloth every day; and tell you a ſtory by way of deſert. — In the heat of the day we will ſit in the ſhade; and in the evening the faireſt of all the milk-maids, who paſs by my gate, ſhall weave a garland for you.

If I ſhould be ſo unfortunate as not to ſee you here, do contrive, to meet me the beginning of October — I ſhall ſtay here about a fortnight, and then ſeek a kinder climate. —— This plague cough of mine ſeems to gain ground, and will bring me at laſt to my grave, in ſpite of all I can do; but while I have ſtrength to run away from it, I will! — I have been wreſtling with it for theſe twenty years paſt; and 'twas with laughter and good ſpirits I have prevented its giving me a fall; but my antagoniſt preſſes me cloſer than ever, and I have nothing left on my ſide but another journey abroad! — apropos, — are you for a ſcheme of that ſort? — If not — perhaps you will accompany me as far as Dover, that we may laugh together upon the beach, to put Neptune in good humour, before I embark. — God bleſs you —

Adieu,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER VI.

To * * * * * * * * *

I have been much concerned at your overthrow; but our roads are ill contrived for the airy vehicles now in fashion. May it be the last fall you ever meet with in this world! — But this reflection costs me a deep sigh — and I fear, my friend, you will get over it no cheaper. — Many, many are the ups and downs of life, and fortune must be uncommonly gracious to that mortal who does not experience a great variety of them: - though perhaps to these may be owing as much of our pleasures as our pains: there are scenes of delight in the vale as well as in the mountain; and the inequalities of nature may not be less necessary to please the eye — than the varieties of life to improve the heart. At best we are but a short-sighted race of beings, with just light enough to discern our way,—to do that is our duty, and should be our care; when a man has done this, he is safe, the rest is of little consequence —

Cover his head with a turf or a stone,
It is all one, it is all one!

— I visited my abbey, as usual, every evening — amid the mouldering ruins of ancient greatness I take my solitary walk; far removed from the noise and bustle of a malicious world, I can cherish the fond re-

remembrance of my Cordelia. Cordelia!—thou wert kind, gentle, and beauteous! thy beauties, rather let me ſay thy misfortunes, firſt raiſed the flame of tender affection in my breaſt!—But thy beauties, and thy misfortunes, are paſſed away together; and all that charmed mankind, and delighted me, become a clod of the valley! — Here, my Cordelia, I will weed clean thy grave —I will ſtretch myſelf upon it — will wet it with tears — and the traveller ſhall not turn aſide to obſerve me. —

But whither am I led? Do, my kind friend, excuſe the wanderings of my pen; it governs me, I govern not it — Farewel; aud receive the warmeſt affection of,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LET-

LETTER VII.

To * * * * * * * * *

— I Fear, that ere this, you may have oftentimes accuſed me of negligence, in not anſwering your laſt letters; but you addreſſed them to me in London, and I was dying in the country. — I have been more ſorely afflicted this laſt time than I ever was before: had I followed the advice of the faculty, it had been over with me; and, contrary to their opinion, I ventured to order myſelf a ſtout bleeding; — this, in all probability, ſaved me; for how long, God only knows! — I am ſtill weak, and can hardly make myſelf heard acroſs my table. — My ſpirits, the beſt friends I ever had in this world, ſtuck cloſe by me in this laſt conflict; by their kind aſſiſtance I have been able to bear the heavy load of live, and walk ſo merrily along the wilderneſs of this world: — thanks to them I have been able to whiſtle and ſing in its moſt uncheery paths! — As it has pleaſed heaven to let them accompany me thus far on my journey, I hope and truſt they will not be ſuffered to leave me now that I am almoſt at the end of it. — I know and feel, my friend, that this laſt ſentiment will give you pain! — this, believe me, is moſt foreign to my wiſhes; but I always write from my heart — and ſuppoſing it to be my practice, to cheat the world, I have ever conſidered the character of a friend too reſpectable to make the

ſport

ſport of an idle imagination. To deceive is a baſe trade at beſt; — but to deceive thoſe we love and value, is a folly ſo totally inexecuſable, that I defy all the arts of ſophiſtry to frame an argument in its favour. — When I open my heart — I ſhew all its follies — its caprices — its wantoneſs — its virtues are all expoſed to view; and though by this means I lay myſelf open to the illiberal and the ill-natured, who are ever ready to ſeize the opportunity of gratifying their dirty paſſions; and withal are ſo numerous, that hypocriſy, with reſpect to them, is accounted a virtue. — But I ſhew all! this may be imprudent — and I am told by ſome ſentimental prudes — that it is indecent; — if ſo, let them put their fans before their faces, or walk on the other ſide of the way. — Diſguiſe is the faſhion; and the man who does not uſe it, is called a Libertine: — for my part — I hate a maſk, and will never wear one! I am not aſhamed of my failings, while I feel that I have ſome little ſtock of virtue to counterbalance them. — The man who hides nothing, who varniſhes nothing, when applauſe, when honour comes, and come it muſt to ſuch, finds no buſy ſomething in his breaſt that gives the lie to it. — 'Tis his own, — and his heart will anſwer it. — Of all ſycophants, ſcourge me thoſe who flatter themſelves! — He who ſpeaks peace to himſelf, when there is no peace, is acting a part he cannot long ſupport — the ſcene cloſes — the curtain drops — and he is himſelf again. The follies, the errors of mankind,

I ſincerely forgive, as I hope to be forgiven; — and when a man is mounted on his hobby-horſe, let him amble or trot, or gallop, ſo he will be quiet, and not let his heart do miſchief. — God ſpeed him! — And if I feel an inclination to put on my fool's cap, and jingle the bells for two or three hours of the four and-twenty — or the whole twenty-four hours together — what is that to any one? — O, Sir, you will be called trifling, fooliſh, &c. &c. — with all my heart! — Pray, good folks, fall on — never ſpare! — Fair ladies, have you got your bellies full? — if ſo, much good may it do you! — But, Sir, we muſt prove you to be a rogue, a raſcal, an hypocrite. — Alas! I have nothing to give you but my fool's cap and my hobby-horſe; — if they are not ſufficient, I muſt beg leave to recommend you to that pale-faced, ſolemn, ſtiff-ſtarched figure who is this moment entering that church; fall upon him! — and for once in your lives, perhaps, you may hit the mark.

I fear, my good friend, you will begin to think, that however my ſpeaking faculties are obſtructed, that one of writing ſtill remains free and large; — but here is the grief. — It is but writing! — My pen is a leaden one, and it is with ſome difficulty I trail it on to aſſure you of my being moſt cordially,

Yours,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

To * * * * * * * * *

I have not been a furlong from Shandyhall ſince I wrote to you laſt;—but why is my pen ſo perverſe? I have been to ****, and my errand was of ſo peculiar a nature, that I muſt give you an account of it. — You will ſcare believe me, when I tell you, it was to out juggle a juggling attorney; to put craft, and all its power, to defiance; and to obtain juſtice from one — who has a heart foul enough to take advantage of the miſtakes of honeſt ſimplicity, and who has raiſed a conſiderable fortune by artifice and injuſtice. However, I gained my point! — It was a ſtar and garter to me! — the matter was as follows: —

"A poor man, the father of my Veſtal, ha-
"ving, by the ſweat of his brow, during a courſe
"of many laborious years, ſaved a ſmall ſum of mo-
"ney, applied to this ſcribe to put it out to uſe for
"him: this was done, and a bond given for the mo-
"ney. — The honeſt man, having no place in his
"cottage which he thought ſufficiently ſecure, put it
"in a hole in the thatch, which had ſerved inſtead
"of a ſtrong box, to keep his money.—In this ſitua-
"tion the bond remained till the time of receiving
"his intereſt drew nigh. — But, alas! — the rain
"which had done no miſchief to his gold, had found

"out

"out his paper ſecurity, and had rotted it to pie-
"ces!" — It would be a difficult matter to paint the diſtreſs of the old countryman upon this diſcovevery; — he came to me weeping, and begging my advice and aſſiſtance! — it cut me to the heart!

Frame to yourſelf the picture of a man upwards of ſixty years of age, — who having with much penury and more toil, with the addition of a ſmall legacy, ſcraped together about fourſcore pounds to ſupport him in the infirmities of old age, and to be a little portion for his child when he ſhould be dead and gone — loſt his little hoard at once; and to aggravate his misfortune, through his own neglect and incaution. — "If I was young, Sir, ſaid he, my "affliction would have been light — and I might ha-
"ve obtained it again! — but I have loſt my com-
"fort when I moſt wanted it! — My ſtaff is taken
"from me when I cannot go alone; and I have no-
"thing to expect, in future life, but the unwilling
"charity of a Pariſh-Officer." — Never, in my whole life, did I wiſh to be rich, with ſo good a grace, as at this time! — What a luxury it would have been to have ſaid, to this afflicted fellow-creature, — "There is thy money — go thy ways — and "be at peace," — But, alas! the Shandy family were never much encumbered with money; and I, the pooreſt of them all, could only aſſiſt him with good counſel: — but I did not ſtop here. — I went myſelf with him to * * * * * * *, where by perſuaſion,

ſion, threats, and ſome art, which, by-the-bye, in ſuch a cauſe, and with ſuch an opponent, was very juſtifiable — I ſent my poor client back to his home, with his comfort and his bond reſtored to him. — Bravo! — Bravo! —

If a man has a right to be proud of any thing, — it is of a good action, done, as it ought to be, without any baſe intereſt lurking at the bottom of it. — Adieu — Adieu ——

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER IX.

To Mrs. V ——.

Of the two bad caſſocs, fair lady, which I am worth in the world, I would this moment freely give the latter of them to find out by what irreſiſtable force of magic it is, that I am influenced to write a letter to you, upon ſo ſhort an acquaintance. — Short — did I ſay? — I unſay it again — I have been acquainted with Mrs. V —— this long and many a day: for, ſurely, the moſt penetrating of her ſex need not be told, that intercourſes of this kind are not to be dated by hours, days, or months — but

— but by the ſlow or rapid progreſs of our intimacies, which are meaſured only by the degrees of penetration, by which we diſcover characters at once— or by the openneſs and frankneſs of heart which lets the obſerver into it without the pains of reflection: either of theſe ſpares us what a ſhort life could ill afford — and that is the long and unconſcionable time in forming connections, which had much better be ſpent in taſting the ſweets of them. — Now of this frame and contexture is the fair Mrs. V—; her character is to be read at once — I ſaw it before I had walked twenty paces beſide her — I believe, in my conſcience, dear lady, if truth was known, that you have no inſide at all.

That you are graceful, elegant, and deſirable, &c. &c. — every common beholder who can ſtare at you, as a Dutch boor does at the Queen of Sheba, — can eaſily find out — but that you are ſenſible, gentle and tender, and from one end to the other of you full of the ſweeteſt tones and modulations, requires a deeper reſearch. — You are a ſyſtem of harmonic vibrations — the ſofteſt and beſt attuned of all inſtruments. Lord! I would give away my other caſſoc to touch you — But in giving my laſt rag of prieſthood for that pleaſure, I ſhould be left naked — to ſay nothing of being quite diſordered — ſo divine a hand as your's would preſently put me into orders again — but if you ſuppoſe this would leave me as you found me, believe me, dear Mrs. V—,

you

you are much mistaken! — All this being duly put together, pray, dear lady, let me ask you; What business you had to come here from ——? or, to speak more to the purpose, what business have you to return back again? — The deuce take you with your musical and other powers; could nothing serve you, but you must turn Tristram Shandy's head, as if it was not turned enough already; — as for your turning my heart — I forgive you, as you have been so good as to turn it towards so excellent and heavenly an object. ——

Now, dear Mrs, V——, if you can help it, do not think of yourself —

But believe me to be,

With the highest esteem

For your character and self,

Your's,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER X.

To * * * * * * * *

I ſnatch half an hour, while my dinner is getting ready, to tell you I am thus far on my way to Shandy-hall: — two more ſtages and I ſhall be at the end of a tedious journey. — Report, for the fourth time, has numbered me with the dead; — and it was generally believed in this part of the world, that my bones were laid in claſſic ground. — This I do not much wonder at; — for, to make the beſt of it, my conſtitution is but a ſcurvy one, and to keep the machine a going a little longer, has been the only motive for my running away from my friends and my country ſo much as I have done of late; —— though weak as it is, it has ſome how or other weathered more ſtorms than many a ſtouter one has been able to do; — could I but transform myſelf into a bird of paſſage, and go and come with the ſummer! — I think I ſhould give the lie to a few more reports of this nature, — before I am called in good earneſt to make a report of myſelf and all my actions to the Being who made me.

The book of engravings, which I left with you, I muſt recommend to your care for a few weeks longer: — nay, — if you think they are worthy your acceptance — keep them for ever! — for to tell you the truth, I have now no occaſion for them: — this

is

is rather an ungracious way of making an offering, but you will excuſe me when I tell you, — that the dear young lady, at whoſe feet I intended to lay them down, — and for whoſe ſake I had preſerved them with ſo much care, is gone to that country, from whence no one returns. — Genius, — wit, beauty, — goodneſs, — all, all were united in her! — Every virtue, — every grace! — I could write for ever on ſuch a theme, — but I muſt have done.

Surely the pleaſures which ariſe from contemplating ſuch characters, — embracing the urn which contains their aſhes, — and ſhedding the tears of friendſhip over it — are far, far ſuperior to the higheſt joys of ſenſe, — or ſenſuality.

If you do not like the laſt word, — I pray you be ſo kind as to ſcratch it out; — for that is a liberty I have never yet ventured to take myſelf with any thing I write.

Adieu, — adieu —

Yours moſt truly,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER XI.

To * * * * * * * *

—— I beheld her tender look — her pathetic eye petrified my fluids — the liquid deſolution drowned thoſe once-bright orbs — the late ſympathetic features, ſo pleaſing in their harmony, are now blaſted — withered — and are dead; — her charms are dwindled into a melancholy, which demands my pity. — Yes — my friend — our once ſprightly and vivacious Harriot is that very object that muſt thrill your ſoul. — How abandoned is that heart which bulges the tear of innocence, and is the cauſe, — the fatal cauſe of overwhelming the ſpotleſs ſoul and plunging the yet-untainted mind into a ſea of ſorrow and repentance — Though born to protect the fair, does not man act the part of a Demon? — firſt alluring by his temptations, and then triumphing in his victory — when villany gets the aſcendency it ſeldom leaves the wretch 'till it has thoroughly polluted him —— T * * * * * *, once the joyous companion of our juvenile extravagances, by a deep-laid ſcheme, ſo far ingratiated himſelf into the good graces of the old man — that even he, with all his penetration and experience, of which old folks generally pique themſelves, could not perceive his drift, and, like the goodneſs of his own heart, believed him honourable: — had I known his pretenſions — I would have flown on the wings of friendſhip — of regard — of affection — and reſcued the lovely innocent

from

from the hands of the ſpoiler: — be not alarmed at my declaration — I have been long bound to her in the reciprocal bonds of affection; — but it is of a more delicate ſtamp, than the groſs materials, nature has planted in us for procreation. — I hope ever to retain the idea of innocence and love her ſtill: — I would love the whole ſex were they equally deſerving.

—— taking her by the hand — the other thrown round her waiſt — after an intimacy allowing ſuch freedoms — with a look deceitfully pleaſing, the villain poured out a torrent of proteſtations — and, though oaths are ſacred, — ſwore, with all the fortitude of a conſcientious man, — the depth of his love — the height of his eſteem — the ſtrength of his atrachment; -- by theſe, and other artful means to anſwer his abandoned purpoſe, for which you know he is but too-well qualified, — gained on the open inexperienced heart of the generous Harriot, and robbed her of her brighteſt jewel. — Oh, England! where are your ſenators? — where are your laws? — Ye Heavens! where reſts your deadly thunder? — why are your bolts reſtrained from o'erwhelming with vengeance this vile ſeducer. — I, — my friend, — I, was the miniſter ſent by juſtice to revenge her wrongs, — revenge? — I diſclaim it — to redreſs her wrongs. — The news of affliction flies — I heard it, and poſted to ****, where forgetting my character, — this is the ſtile of the enthuſiaſt — it moſt became

my character — I ſaw him in his retreat — I flew out of the chaiſe — caught him by the collar — and in a tumult of paſſion — demanded: — ſure, if anger is excuſable, it muſt be when it is exerted by a deteſtation of vice; — I demanded him to reſtore: — alas! what was not in his power to return — Vengeance! — and ſhall theſe vermin — theſe ſpoilers of the fair — theſe murderers of the mind — lurk and creep about in dens, ſecure to themſelves and pillage all around them? — Diſtracted with my rage, I charged him with his crime — exploded his baſeneſs — condemned his villany; — while coward guilt ſat on his ſullen brow, and, like a criminal conſcious of his deed, tremblingly pronounced his fear. —— He hoped means might be found for a ſufficient atonement — offered a tender of his hand as a ſatisfaction, and a life devoted to her ſervice as a recompence for his error. — His humiliation ſtruck me — 'twas the only means he could have contrived to aſſuage my anger. —— I heſitated — pauſed — thought — and ſtill muſt think on ſo important a concern: — aſſiſt me — I am half afraid of truſting my Harriot in the hands of a man, whoſe character I too well know to be the antipodes of Harriot's. — He all fire and diſſipation; — ſhe all meekneſs and ſentiment! — nor can I think there is any hopes of reformation; — the offer proceeds more from ſurpriſe or fear, than juſtice and ſincerity. — The world — the world will exclaim, and my Harriot be a caſt-off from ſociety. — Let her! — I had rather ſee her thus

thus, than miſerably linked for life to a lump of vice! — She ſhall retire to ſome corner of the world, and there weep out the remainder of her days in ſorrow — forgetting the wretch who has abuſed her confidence, but ever remembering the friend who conſoles her in retirement — You, my dear Charles, ſhall bear a part with me in the delightful talk of whiſpering "peace to thoſe who are in trouble, and "healing the broken in ſpirit,"

Adieu,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

LETTER XII.

To * * * * * * * *

SIR!

I feel the weight of obligation which your friendſhip has laid upon me, and if it ſhould never be in my power to make you a recompence, I hope you will be recompenſed at the "Reſurrection of the "juſt," — I hope, Sir, we ſhall both be found in that catalogue; — and we are encouraged to hope, by the example of Abraham's faith, even "Againſt hope." — I think there is, at leaſt, as much probability of our reaching, and rejoicing in the "Heaven

"where we would be," as there was of the old Patriarch's having a child by his old wife. — There is not any perſon living or dead, whom I have ſo ſtrong a deſire to ſee and converſe with as yourſelf: — indeed I have no inclination to viſit, or ſay a ſyllable to but a few perſons in this lower vale of vanity and tears beſides you; — but I often derive a peculiar ſatisfaction in converſing with the ancient and modern dead, — who yet live and ſpeak excellently in their works. — My neighbours think often alone, — and yet at ſuch times I am in company with more than five hundred mutes — each of whom, at my pleaſure, communicates his ideas to me by dumb ſigns — quite as intelligibly as any perſon living can do by uttering of words. — They always keep the diſtance from me which I direct, — and, with a motion of my hand, I can bring them as near to me as I pleaſe. — I lay hands on fifty of them ſometimes in an evening, and handle them as I like: — they never complain of ill-uſage, — and when diſmiſſed from my preſence, — though ever ſo abruptly, — take no offence. Such convenience is not to be enjoyed — nor ſuch liberty to be taken — with the living: — we are bound — in point of good-manners to admit all our pretended friends when they knock for an entrance, and diſpenſe with all the nonſenſe or impertinence which they broach 'till they think proper to withdraw: nor can we take the liberty of humbly and decently oppoſing their ſentiments without exciting their diſguſt, and being in dan-

danger of their ſplenetic repreſentation after they have left us.

I am weary of talking to the many, — who, though quick of hearing — are ſo "Slow of heart to believe" — propoſitions which are next to ſelf-evident; — you and I were not caſt in one mould, — corporal compariſon will atteſt it, — and yet we are faſhioned ſo much alike, that we may paſs for twins: — were it poſſible to take an inventory of all our ſentiments and feelings — juſt and unjuſt — holy and impure — there would appear as little difference between them, as there is between inſtinct and reaſon; — or — wit and madneſs, the barriers which ſeparate theſe — like the real eſſence of bodies — eſcape the piercing eye of metaphyſicks, and cannot be pointed out more clearly, than geometricians define a ſtrait line, which is ſaid to have length without breadth. — O ye learned anatomical aggregates, who pretend to inſtruct other aggregates! be as candid as the ſage, whom ye pretend to revere — and tell them, that all you know is, that you know nothing!

—— I have a mort to communicate to you on different ſubjects — my mountain will be in labour 'till I ſee you — and then — what then? — why you muſt expect to ſee it bring forth — a mouſe. — I therefore beſeech you to have a watchful eye to the cats; — but it is ſaid that mice were deſigned to be killed by cats. — Cats to be worried by dogs, &c. &c. — This may be true — and I think I am

made to be killed by my cough, — which is a perpetual plague to me; what, in the name of ſound lungs, has my cough to do with you — or — you with my cough?

I am, Sir, with the moſt

Perfect affection and eſteem,

Your humble Servant,

LAWRENCE STERNE.

THE HISTORY OF A WATCH COAT WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

YORICK to * * *

In my laſt, for want of ſomething better to write about, I told you what a world of ſending and proving we have had of late, in this little * village of ours, about an old caſt-off pair of black pluſh-breeches, which † John, our pariſh clerk, about ten years ago, it ſeems, had made a promiſe of to one Trim ††, who is our ſexton and dog-whipper. — To this you write me word, that you have had more than either one or two occaſions to know a good deal of the ſhifty behavior of the ſaid maſter Trim, — and that you are aſtoniſhed, nor can you for your ſoul conceive, how ſo worthleſs a fellow, and ſo worthleſs a thing into the bargain, could become the occaſion of ſo much racket as I have repreſented. —

Now, though you do not ſay expreſſly, you could wiſh to hear any more about it, yet I ſee plainly enough I have raiſed your curioſity, and therefore, from

* York. † Dr. Fount—n, Dean of York. †† Dr. T—ph-m.

from the ſame motive that I ſlightly mentioned it at all in my laſt letter, I will in this give you a full and very circumſtantial account of the whole affair.

But, before I begin, I muſt firſt ſet you right in one very material point, in which I have miſled you, as to the true cauſe of all this uproar amongſt us — which does not take its riſe, as I then told you, from the affair of the breeches, but, on the contrary, the whole affair of the breeches has taken its riſe from it. — To underſtand which, you muſt know, that the firſt beginning of the ſquabble was not between John the pariſh-clerk and Trim the ſexton, but betwixt the * parſon of the pariſh and the ſaid maſter Trim, about an old watch-coat that had hung up many years in the church, which Trim had ſet his heart upon; and nothing would ſerve Trim, but he muſt take it home in order to have it converted into a warm underpetticoat for his wife, and a jerkin for himſelf againſt winter; which, in a plaintive tone, he moſt humbly begged his reverence would conſent to.

I need not tell you, Sir, who have ſo often felt it, that a principle of ſtrong compaſſion tranſports a generous mind ſometimes beyond what is ſtrictly right; — the parſon was within an ace of being an honourable example of this very crime; — for no ſooner did the diſtinct words — petticoat — poor wife — warm — winter, ſtrike upon his ear, — but his heart

* Apb. H—tt—n.

heart warmed — and before Trim had well got to the end of his petition, being a gentleman of a frank open temper, he told him he was welcome to it with all his heart and ſoul. — But, Trim, ſays he, as you ſee I am but juſt got down to my living, and am an utter ſtranger to all pariſh matters, knowing nothing about this old watch-coat, you beg of me, having never ſeen it in my life, and therefore cannot be a judge whether 'tis fit for ſuch a purpoſe, or, if it is, in truth know not whether 'tis mine to beſtow upon you or not, — you muſt have a week or ten days patience, till I can make ſome inquiries about it — and, if I find it is in my power, I tell you again, man, your wife is heartily welcome to an under-petticoat out of it, and you to a jerkin, was the thing as good again as you repreſent it.

It is neceſſary to inform you, Sir, in this place, that the parſon was earneſtly bent to ſerve Trim in this affair, not only from the motive of generoſity, which I have juſtly aſcribed to him, but likewiſe from another motive, and that was by making ſome ſort of recompence for a multitude of ſmall ſervices which Trim had occaſionally done, and indeed was continually doing, as he was much about the houſe, when his own man was out of the way. — For all theſe reaſons together, I ſay, the parſon of the pariſh intended to ſerve Trim in this matter to the utmoſt of his power. All that was wanting, was previouſly to inquire if any one had a claim to it, or whether,

as

as it had time-immemorial hung up in the church, the taking it down might not raiſe a clamour in the pariſh. Theſe inquiries were the things that Trim dreaded in his heart — He knew very well, that, if the parſon ſhould but ſay one word to the churchwardens about it, there would be an end of the whole affair. For this, and ſome other reaſons not neceſſary to be told you at preſent, Trim was for allowing no time in this matter; — but on the contrary doubled his diligence and importunity at the vicaragehouſe — plagued the whole family to death — preſt his ſuit morning, noon, and night, and, to ſhorten my ſtory, teaſed the poor gentleman, who was but in an ill ſtate of healt, almoſt out of his life about it.

You will not wonder when I tell you, that all this hurry and precipitation, on the ſide of maſter Trim, produced its natural effect on the ſide of the parſon, and that was a ſuſpicion that all was not right at the bottom.

He was one evening ſitting alone in his ſtudy, weighing and turning this doubt every way in his mind, and after an hour and a half's ſerious deliberation upon the affair, and running over Trim's behaviour throughout — he was juſt ſaying to himſelf — it muſt be ſo; — when a ſudden rap at the door put an end to his ſoliloquy, and in a few minutes to his doubts too; for a labourer in the town, who deemed himſelf paſt his fifty-ſecond year, had been returned by the conſtables in the militia liſt — and he had

had come with a groat in his hand to ſearch the pariſh-regiſter for his age. The parſon bid the poor fellow put the groat into his pocket, and go into the kitchen — then ſhutting the ſtudy door, and taking down the pariſh regiſter — who knows, ſays he, but I may find ſomething here about this ſelfſame watch-coat? He had ſcarce unclaſped the book, in ſaying this, when he popped on the very thing he wanted, fairly wrote in the firſt page, paſted to the inſide of one of the covers, whereon was a memorandum about the very thing in queſtion in theſe expreſs words: — Memorandum. "The "great watch-coat was purchaſed and given, above "two hundred years ago, by the lord of the manor "to this pariſh church, to the ſole uſe and behoof "of the poor ſextons thereof, and their ſucceſſors for "ever, to be worn by them reſpectively in winterly "cold nights in ringing complines, paſſing "bells, &c. which the ſaid lord of the manor had "done in piety to keep the poor wretches warm, "and for the good of his own ſoul, for which they "were directed to pray, &c." Juſt heaven! ſaid the parſon to himſelf looking upwards, what an eſcape have I had! give this for an under-petticoat to Trim's wife! I would not have conſented to ſuch a deſecration to be Primate of all England — nay, I would not have diſturbed a ſingle button of it for all my tithes.

Scarce

Scarce were the words out of his mouth, when in pops Trim with the whole ſubject of the exclamation under both his arms — I ſay under both his arms — for he had actually got it ript and cut out ready, his own jerkin under one arm, and the petticoat under the other, in order to carry to the taylor to be made up, and had juſt ſtepped in, in high ſpirits, to ſhow the parſon how cleverly it had held out.

There are now many good ſimilies ſubſiſting in the world, but which I have neither time to recollect or look for, which would give you a ſtrong conception of the aſtoniſhment and honeſt indignation which this unexpected ſtroke of Trim's impudence impreſſed upon the parſon's looks — let it ſuffice to ſay, that it exceeded all fair deſcription — as well as all power of proper reſentment — except this, that Trim was ordered, in a ſtern voice, to lay the bundles down upon the table — to go about his buſineſs, and wait upon him, at his peril, the next morning at eleven preciſely. — Againſt this hour, like a wiſe man, the parſon had ſent to deſire John the pariſh clerk, who bore an exceeding good character as a man of truth, and who, having moreover a pretty freehold of about eighteen pounds a year in the townſhip, was a leading man in it; and, upon the whole, was ſuch a one of whom it might be ſaid, that he rather did honour to his office than that his office did honour to him, — him he ſends for with the churchwardens and one

one of the ſideſmen, a grave, knowing old man, to be preſent — for, as Trim had withheld the whole truth from the parſon touching the watch-coat, he thought it probable he would as certainly do the ſame thing to others. Tho' this, I ſaid, was wiſe, the trouble of the precaution might have been ſpared,— becauſe the parſon's character was unblemiſhed, — and he had ever been held by the world in the eſtimation of a man of honour and integrity. — Trim's character on the contrary was as well known, if not in the world at leaſt in all the pariſh, to be that of a little, dirty, pimping, pettyfogging, ambidextrous fellow; — who neither cared what he did or ſaid of any, provided he could get a penny by it. This might, I ſaid, have made any precaution needleſs,— but you muſt know, as the parſon had in a manner but juſt got down to his living, he dreaded the conſequences of the leaſt ill impreſſion on his firſt entrance among his pariſhioners, which would have diſabled him from doing them the good he wiſhed — ſo that out of regard to his flock, more than the neceſſary care due to himſelf — he was reſolved not to lie at the mercy of what reſentment might vent, or malice lend an ear to. —

Accordingly the whole matter was rehearſed, from firſt to laſt, by the parſon, in the manner I've told you, in the hearing of John the pariſh clerk, and in the preſence of Trim.

Trim had little to ſay for himſelf, except "that the parſon had abſolutely promiſed to befriend him

and his wife in the affair to the utmoſt of his power; that the watch-coat was certainly in his power, and that he might ſtill give it him if he pleaſed."

To this the parſon's reply was ſhort, but ſtrong, "That nothing was in his power to do but what he could do honeſtly, — that, in giving the coat to him and his wife, he ſhould do a manifeſt wrong to the next ſexton, the great watch-coat being the moſt comfortable part of the place; — that he ſhould moreover injure the right of his own ſucceſſor, who would be juſt ſo much a worſe patron as the worth of the coat amounted to, and, in a word, he declared, that his whole intent in promiſing that coat was charity to Trim, but wrong to no man, — that was a reſerve, he ſaid, made in all caſes of this kind: and he declared ſolemnly, in verbo ſacerdotis, that this was his meaning, and was ſo underſtood by Trim himſelf."

With the weight of this truth, and the great good ſenſe and ſtrong reaſon, which accompanied all the parſon ſaid on the ſubject, — poor Trim was driven to his laſt ſhift — and begged he might be ſuffered to plead his right and title to the watch-coat, if not by promiſe, at leaſt by ſervitude. — It was well known how much he was intitled to it upon theſe ſcores: that he had black'd the perſon's ſhoes without count, and greaſed his boots above fifty times — that he had run for eggs in the town upon all occaſions — whetted the knives at all hours — catched his horſe, and rubbed him down — that, for his wife,

ſhe

ſhe had been ready upon all occaſions to char for them; and neither he nor ſhe, to the beſt of his remembrance, ever took a farthing, or any thing beyond a mug of ale. — To this account of his ſervices, he begged leave to add thoſe of his wiſhes, which, he ſaid, had been equally great. — He affirmed, and was ready he ſaid, to make it appear, by a number of witneſſes, "he had drank his reverence's health a thouſand times, by the bye he did not add out of the parſon's own ale, — that he had not only drank his health but wiſhed it, and never came to the houſe but aſked his man kindly how he did; that in particular, about half a year ago, when his reverence cut his finger in paring an apple, he went half a mile to aſk a cunning woman what was good to ſtaunch blood, and actually returned with a cobweb in his breeches pocket. Nay, ſays Trim, it was not a fortnight ago, when your reverence took that ſtrong purge, that I went to the far end of the whole town to borrow you a cloſeſtool — and came back, as the neighbours, who flouted, me will all bear witneſs, with the pan upon my head, and never thought it too much." Trim concluded this pathetic remonſtrance with ſaying "he hoped his reverence's heart would not ſuffer him to requite ſo many faithful ſervices by ſo unkind a return: — that if it was ſo, as he was the firſt, ſo he hoped he ſhould be the laſt example of a man of his condition ſo treated." This plan of Trim's defence which Trim had put himſelf upon, could admit of no other reply than general ſmile. — Upon the

whole, let me inform you, that all that could be ſaid pro and con, on both ſides, being fairly heard, it was plain that Trim in every part of this affair had behaved very ill — and one thing, which was never expected to be known of him, happened in the courſe of this debate to come out againſt him, namely, that he had gone and told the parſon, before he had ever ſet foot in his pariſh, that John his pariſh clerk — his church-wardens, and ſome of the heads of the pariſh, were a parcel of ſcoundrels. — Upon the upſhot, Trim was kick'd out of doors, and told at his peril never to come there again.

At firſt, Trim huff'd and bounced moſt terribly, — ſwore he would get a warrant, — that nothing would ſerve him but he would call a bye-law, and tell the whole pariſh how the parſon had miſuſed him; but cooling of that, as fearing the parſon might poſſibly bind him over to his good behaviour, and, for aught he knew, might ſend him to the houſe of correction, he lets the parſon alone, and to revenge himſelf falls foul upon the clerk, who had no more to do in the quarrel than you or I; — rips up the promiſe of the old — caſt — pair of black — pluſh — breeches; and raiſes an uproar in the town about it, notwithſtanding it had ſlept ten years — but all this, you muſt know, is looked upon in no other light but as an artful ſtroke of generalſhip in Trim to raiſe a duſt, and cover himſelf under the diſgraceful chaſtiſement he has undergone. ——

If

If your curioſity is not yet ſatisfied — I will now proceed to relate the battle of the breeches in the ſame exact manner I have done that of the watch-coat. ——

Be it known then, that about ten years ago, when John was appointed pariſhclerk of this church, this ſaid Trim took no ſmall pains to get into John's good graces, in order, as it afterwards appeared, to coax a promiſe out of him of a pair of breeches, which John had then by him, of black pluſh, not much the worſe for wearing. — Trim only begged, for God's ſake, to have them beſtowed upon him, when John ſhould think fit to caſt them. ——

Trim was one of thoſe kind of men who loved a bit of finery in his heart, and would rather have a tatter'd rag of a better body's, than the beſt plain whole thing his wife could ſpin him.

John, who was naturally unſuſpicious, made no more difficulty of promiſing the breeches than the parſon had done in promiſing the great coat; and indeed with ſomething leſs reſerve, — becauſe the breeches were John's own, and he could give them, without wrong, to whom he thought fit.

It happened, I was going to ſay unluckily, but I ſhould rather ſay moſt luckily, for Trim, for he was the only gainer by it, that a quarrel, about ſome ſix or eight weeks after this, broke out betwixt the late parſon of the pariſh and John the clerk. Somebody, and it was thought to be nobody but Trim, had put it into the parſon's head, "that John's deſk

in the church was at the leaſt four inches higher than it ſhould be — that the thing gave offence, and was indecorous, inaſmuch as it approached too near upon a level with the parſon's deſk itſelf." — This hardſhip the parſon complained of loudly, and told John, one day after prayers, "he could bear it no longer, — and would have it altered, and brought down as it ſhould be." John made no other reply, but "that the deſk was not of his raiſing: — that 'twas not one hair breadth higher than he found it, — and that as he found it ſo he would leave it. — In ſhort, he would neither make an encroachment, neither would he ſuffer one." — The * late parſon might have his virtues, but the leading part of his character was not humility, — ſo that John's ſtiffneſs in this point was not likely to reconcile matters. — This was Trim's harveſt.

After a friendly hint to John to ſtand his ground, away hies Trim to make his market at the vicarage. — What paſſed there I will not ſay, intending not to be uncharitable; ſo ſhall content myſelf with only gueſſing at it from the ſudden change that appeared in Trim's dreſs for the better, — for he had left his old ragged coat, hat, and wig, in the ſtable, and was come forth ſtrutting acroſs the church-yard, yclad in a good charitable caſt coat, large hat, and wig, which the parſon had juſt given him. — Ho! ho! hollo! John, cries Trim, in an inſolent bravo, as loud as ever he could bawl — ſee here,

* Abp. H—rr—g

here, my lad, how fine I am. — The more ſhame for you, anſwered John ſeriouſly. — Do you think, Trim, ſays he, ſuch finery, gained, by ſuch ſervices, becomes you, or can wear well? — Fy upon it, Trim, I could not have expected this from you, conſidering what friendſhip you pretended, and how kind I have ever been to you; — how many ſhillings, and ſixpences, I have generouſly lent you in your diſtreſſes. — Nay, it was but the other day that I promiſed you theſe black pluſh breeches I have on. — Rot your breeches, quoth Trim, for Trim's brain was half turn'd with his new finery, rot your breeches, ſays he, — I would not take them up were they laid at my door — give them, and be d— d to you, to whom you like. — I would have you to know I can have a better pair of the parſon's any day in the week. — John told him plainly, as his word had once paſſed him, he had a ſpirit above taking advantage of his inſolence in giving them away to another; — but, to tell him his mind freely, he thought he had got ſo many favours of that kind, and was ſo likely to get many more for the ſame ſervices, of the parſon, that he had better give up the breeches, with good nature, to ſome one, who would be more thankful for them.

Here John mentioned * Mark Slender, who it ſeems the day before had aſked John for them, not knowing they were under promiſe to Trim. — "Come, Trim, ſays he, let poor Mark have them,

 —you

* Dr. Braith—t.

— you know he has not a pair to his a—, beſides, you ſee he is juſt of my ſize, and they will fit to a T, whereas if I give 'em to you, look ye, they are not worth much, and beſides, you could not get your backſide into them, if you had them, without tearing them all to pieces." — Every tittle of this was moſt undoubtedly true, for Trim, you muſt know, by foul feeding, and playing the good-fellow at the parſon's, was grown ſomewhat groſs about the lower parts, if not higher; ſo that, as all John ſaid upon the occaſion was fact, Trim with much ado, and after a hundred hums and hahs, at laſt, out of mere compaſſion to Mark, "ſings, ſeals, and de-„livers up ALL RIGHT, Intereſt, and pretenſions „whatsoever, in and to the ſaid breeches, thereby „binding his heirs, executors, adminiſtrators and aſſigns, „never more to call the ſaid claim in QUESTION." — All this renunciation was ſet forth, in an ample manner, to be in pure pity to Mark's nakedneſs; — but the ſecret was, Trim had an eye to, and firmly expected, in his own mind the great green pulpit-cloth, and old velvet cuſhion, which were that very year to be taken down, — which, by the by, could he have wheedled John a ſecond time, as he had hoped, would have made up the loſs of the breeches ſeven fold.

Now, you muſt know, this pulpitcloth and cuſhion were not in John's gift, but in the church-wardens, &c. However, as I ſaid above, that John was a leading man in the pariſh, Trim knew he could help him

him to 'em if he would; — but John had got a ſurfeit of him, — ſo, when the pulpit-cloth, &c. were taken down, they were immediately given, John having a great ſay in it, to * William Doe, who underſtood very well what uſe to make of them.

As for the old breeches, poor Mark lived to wear them but a ſhort time, and they got into the poſſeſſion of Lorry Slim †, an unlucky wight, by whom they are ſtill worn, — in truth, as you will gueſs, they are very thin by this time.

But Lorry has a light heart, and what recommends them to him is this, that, as thin as they are, he knows that Trim, let him ſay what he will to the contrary, ſtill envies the poſſeſſor of them, and with all his pride would be very glad to wear them after him.

Upon this footing have theſe affairs ſlept quietly for near ten years — and would have ſlept for ever, but for the unlucky kicking out, which, as I ſaid, has ripped this ſquabble up afreſh; ſo that it was no longer ago than laſt week, that Trim met and inſulted John in the public town-way before a hundred people, tax'd him with the promiſe of the old caſt pair of black breeches, notwithſtanding Trim's ſolemn renunciation — twitted him with the pulpitcloth and velvet cuſhion — as good as told him he was ignorant of the common duties of his clerkſhip; adding, very inſolently, that he knew not ſo much as to give out a common pſalm in tune.

* Mr. Birdm—e. † Lawrence Sterne.

John contended himſelf by giving a plain anſwer to every article that Trim had laid to his charge, and appealed to his neighbours, who remembered the whole affair, — and, as he knew there was never any thing to be got by wreſtling with a chimney-ſweeper, he was going to take his leave of Trim for ever. But hold — the mob by this time had got round them, and their high mightineſſes inſiſted upon having Trim tried upon the ſpot. —

Trim was accordingly tried, and, after a full hearing, was convicted a ſecond time, and handled more roughly by one or more of them, than even at the parſon's. ——

Trim, ſays one, are you not aſhamed of yourſelf to make all this rout and diſturbance in the town, and ſet neighbours together by the ears, about an old — worn — out — pair of caſt — breeches not worth half a crown? Is there a caſt coat, or a place in the whole town, that will bring you in a ſhilling, but what you have ſnapped up like a greedy hound as you are. ——

In the firſt place, are you not ſexton and dog-whipper, worth three pounds a year? Then you begged the church-wardens to let your wife have the waſhing and darning of the churchlinen, which brings you in thirteen ſhillings and fourpence; then you have ſix ſhillings and eightpence for oiling and winding up the clock, both paid you at Eaſter — the pounder's place, which is worth forty ſhillings a year, you have got that too; — you are the bailiff, which the

the late parſon got you, which brings you in forty ſhillings more,

Beſides all this, you have ſix pounds a year, paid you quarterly, for being molecatcher to the pariſh. Aye, ſays the luckleſs wight above-mentioned, who was ſtanding cloſe by him, with the pluſh breeches on, "you are not only molecatcher, Trim, but you catch STRAY CONIES too in the dark, and you pretend a licence for it, which, I trow, will be looked into at the next quarter ſeſſions." I maintain it, I have a licence, ſays Trim, bluſhing as red as ſcarlet,— I have a licence, and, as I farm a warren in the next pariſh, I will catch conies every hour of the night. You catch conies! ſays a toothleſs old woman juſt paſſing by.

This ſet the mob a laughing, and ſent every man home in perfect good humour, except Trim, who waddled very ſlowly off with that kind of inflexible gravity only to be equalled by one animal in the creation, and ſurpaſſed by none.

I am,

Sir, yours, &c. &c.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

I have broke open my letter to inform you, that I miſſed the opportunity of ſending it by the meſſenger, who, I expected, would have called upon me in his return through this village to York; ſo it has lain a week or ten days by me.— I am not ſorry for the diſappointment, becauſe ſomething has ſince happened, in continuation of this affair, which I am thereby enabled to traſmit to you all under one trouble.

When I finiſhed the above account, I thought, as did every ſoul in the pariſh, Trim had met with ſo thorough a rebuff from John the pariſh clerk, and the town's folks, who all took againſt him, that Trim would be glad to be quiet, and let the matter reſt.

But, it ſeems, it is not half an hour ago ſince Trim ſallied forth again, and, having borrowed a ſowgelder's horn, with hard blowing he got the whole town round him, and endeavoured to raiſe a diſturbance, and fight the whole battle over again, — alleged that he had been uſed in the laſt fray worſe than a dog, not by John the pariſh clerk, for I ſhould not, quoth Trim, have valued him a ruſh ſingle-hands, — but all the town ſided with him, and twelve men in buckram ſet upon me, all at once, and kept me in play at ſword's point for three hours together.

Beſides, quoth Trim, there were two miſbegotten knaves in Kendal green, who lay all the while

in

in ambuſh in John's own houſe, and let drive at me all together — a plague, ſays Trim, of all cowards.

Trim repeated this ſtory above a dozen times, which made ſome of the neighbours pity him, thinking the poor fellow craked-brained, and that he actually believed what he ſaid.

After this Trim dropped the affair of the breeches, and began a freſh diſpute about the reading-deſk, which I told you had occaſioned ſome ſmall diſpute between the late parſon and John ſome years ago. — This reading-deſk, as you will obſerve, was but an epiſode wove into the main ſtory by the bye, for the main affair was the battle of the breeches and the great coat.

However Trim being at laſt driven out of theſe two citadels, — he has ſeized hold, in his retreat, of this reading-deſk, with a view, as it ſeems, to take ſhelter behind it.

I cannot ſay but the man has fought it out obſtinately enough, and, had his cauſe been good, I ſhould have really pitied him. For, when he was driven out of the great watch-coat, you ſee he did not run away; no — he retreated behind the breeches; and, when he could make nothing of it behind the breeches, he got behind the reading-deſk. To what other hold Trim will next retreat, the politicians of this village are not agreed. Some think his next move will be towards the rear of the parſon's boot; but, as it is thought he cannot make a long

long ſtand there, others are of opinion, that Trim will once more in his life get hold of the parſon's horſe, and charge upon him, or perhaps behind him: but, as the horſe is not eaſy to be caught, the more general opinion is, that, when he is driven out of the readingdeſk, he will make his laſt retreat in ſuch a manner, as, if poſſible, to gain the cloſeſtool, and defend himſelf behind it to the very laſt drop.

If Trim ſhould make this movement, by my advice he ſhould be left, beſide his citadel, in full poſſeſſion of the field of battle, where 'tis certain he will keep every body a league off, and may hop by himſelf till he is weary. Beſides, as Trim ſeems bent upon purging himſelf, and may have abundance of foul humours to work off, I think he cannot be better placed.

But this is all matter of ſpeculation. — Let me carry you back to matter of fact, and tell you what king of ſtand Trim has actually made behind the ſaid deſk: "Neighbours and townſmen all, I will be ſworn before my lord mayor, that John and his nineteen men in buckram have abuſed me worſe than a dog; for they told you that I play'd faſt and go looſe with the late parſon and him in that old diſpute of theirs about the reading deſk, and that I made matters worſe between them and not better."

Of this charge Trim declared he was as innocent as the child that was unborn, — that he would be book-ſworn he had no hand in it.

He

He produced a ſtrong witneſs, and moreover inſinuated, that John himſelf, inſtead of being angry for what he had done in it, had actually thanked him. — Aye, Trim, ſays the wight in the pluſh-breeches, but that was, Trim, the day before John found thee out. Beſides, Trim, there is nothing in that, for the very year that you was made town's pounder, thou knoweſt well that I both thanked thee myſelf, and moreover gave thee a good warm ſupper for turning John Lund's cows and horſes out of my hard corn cloſe, which if thou hadſt not done, as thou toldſt me, I ſhould have loſt my whole crop; whereas John Lund and Thomas Patt, who are both here to teſtify, and are both willing to take their oaths on't, that thou thyſelf was the very man who ſet the gate open — and after all, it was not thee, Trim, 'twas the blackſmith's poor lad who turned them out — ſo that a man may be thanked and rewarded too for a good turn which he never did, nor ever did intend.

Trim could not ſuſtain this unexpected ſtroke; — ſo Trim marched off the field without colours flying, or any other enſigns of honour whatever. — Whether after this Trim intends to rally a ſecond time — or whether he may not take it into his head to claim the victory, — none but Trim himſelf can inform you.

However, the general opinion upon the whole is this, that, in three ſeveral pitch'd battles, Trim has been ſo trimm'd, as never diſaſtrous hero was trimm'd before.

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